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How one photographer shot
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 **WHITE WALL**



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I'm sure, like many of you, I often cite a lack of time as the reason I don't get out with my camera as much as I would like to. Family life, domestic chores, and my 3-4 hour daily commute all seem to get in the way. It's no coincidence that, often, people only take up hobbies such as photography once their kids have grown up and left the nest. Sometimes, when I do

get the time, I'd rather just put my feet up and relax. Does this all sound familiar? So when I come across the likes of Russ Barnes, who has managed to put together a great set of pictures of an unlikely subject – pigeons – entirely in his lunch breaks, I feel a little guilty about my feeble excuses. Maybe you will too when you read our feature on pages 20-24 and enjoy his terrific pictures.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



© K3EPhoto

Many Aspects by K3EPhoto

Nikon D3300, 18-140mm, 1/800sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

This image by K3EPhoto was uploaded to the AP Flickr group and is a fine demonstration of the virtues of architectural photography.

Stalking around the city streets, camera in hand, can often be an overwhelming task. With so much to photograph, how do you decide what to shoot? As we can see from this shot, the key thing to remember is that the city environment, in fact

any environment, is an interaction of basic lines and shapes. Seeing things in this way helps us to understand the simplistic way in which these elements can work together. This shot is a perfect demonstration of that idea. The image has real depth too – something that is aided by the choice of lens. Also, removing the colour serves to make the image all the more graphic.



Win! Each week we choose our favourite picture on Facebook, Flickr or the reader gallery using #appicoftheweek. PermaJet proudly supports the online picture of the week winner, who will receive a top-quality print of their image on the finest PermaJet paper. It is important to bring images to life outside the digital sphere, so we encourage everyone to get printing today! Visit www.permajet.com to learn more.

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CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 17.

Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 17.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

Super Stopper

Photographers can exploit the creative benefits of long-exposure photography using the new Super Stopper, fresh from Lee Filters. The Lee Filters Super Stopper filter is designed to allow a 30sec exposure to be achieved from a 1/1000sec exposure, for example. The Super Stopper costs from £70.45. For details visit www.leefilters.com.



McCullin gong

War ace Don McCullin has won a photo award at a ceremony in Dubai, UAE. McCullin bagged the Photographic Research/Report Award at the Hamdan International Photography Awards (HIPA), which is committed to encouraging and supporting art, culture and innovation in Dubai.

Closure plan denial

The Science Museum has denied it plans to close its Media Space gallery, a collaboration with the National Media Museum in Bradford, this year, following a claim published in *The Guardian* last month. The claim was made in a letter signed by scores of photographers and artists, protesting plans to move the RPS Collection from Bradford to London. A Science Museum spokeswoman told AP: 'Media Space is not closing this year and the India exhibition is scheduled to take place in 2017.'



Instagram set for overhaul

Instagram fans may be used to seeing their posts pop up in the order in which they were posted, but all that seems poised to change. The popular photo-sharing app has announced plans to shift from a chronological feed to a Facebook-like algorithmic model that displays what it thinks you want to see first. Users' feeds will soon be ordered to show the posts that the app deems most interesting and appropriate to them first.

Tweet signals end of Sam cams

Samsung will neither confirm nor deny that it has stopped manufacturing cameras, following a message posted on Twitter by Samsung India earlier this year. In the tweet, would-be customer Akanksha Redhu asked for the company's assistance in finding a Samsung camera to purchase. In response, Samsung replied, 'We would like to inform you the [sic] we have officially discontinued manufacturing of Camera'.



© ANADOLU AGENCY / GETTY IMAGES

WEEKEND PROJECT

Photograph bluebells

'One of the highlights of spring is the appearance of bluebells across our countryside,' writes Robert Birkby. 'Late April and early May tend to be the optimal times to capture bluebells at their best, and although much photographed, it really is difficult to resist those fabulous swathes of colour across our hills and woodlands. At the same time, grass starts to grow more quickly and new leaves are beginning to appear on deciduous trees. After a long and dark winter these fresh, vibrant greens and blues form a magnificent palette of colour. Some regard bluebell shots as clichéd, but with a little effort it's possible to capture something more original. The opportunities are endless. Try low and high viewpoints, and adjusting depth of field, focal length and brightness.'

1 Early mornings in bluebell woods often produce the best results. Still and misty conditions are common at this time of year. Mist adds atmosphere and depth, while a carpet of bluebells is the icing on the cake.

2 The famous bluebell locations are popular, so you'll likely be sharing your view with other photographers. But bluebells can be found in the most unlikely locations, so try to find your own untrampled patch.

BIG picture

Holi Festival celebrations take place across India

◀ Festivals from across the world have always provided ample fodder for travel photographers, largely owing to their often religious associations or, in the case of an event such as the Holi Festival, its astounding visual impact. In this image we find an Indian child smeared with coloured powder taking part in the Holi Festival celebrations in Mathura, India, last month. Holi, the festival of colours, is a riotous celebration of the coming of spring and falls on the day after the full moon in March each year. Revellers spray coloured powder and water on each other with great gusto, while adults extend the hand of peace. In recent times, the festival has traversed the world (you can catch it in London this August). While the spiritual edge may become lost, it's still a heady and exciting time.

Words & numbers

Photography is the story I fail to put into words

Destin Sparks
Australian landscape photographer

80

Exhibition of 80 portraits to mark the 80th anniversary of Olympus cameras, by John Nassari at the Art Bermondsey Project Space, London, from 3-7 May.

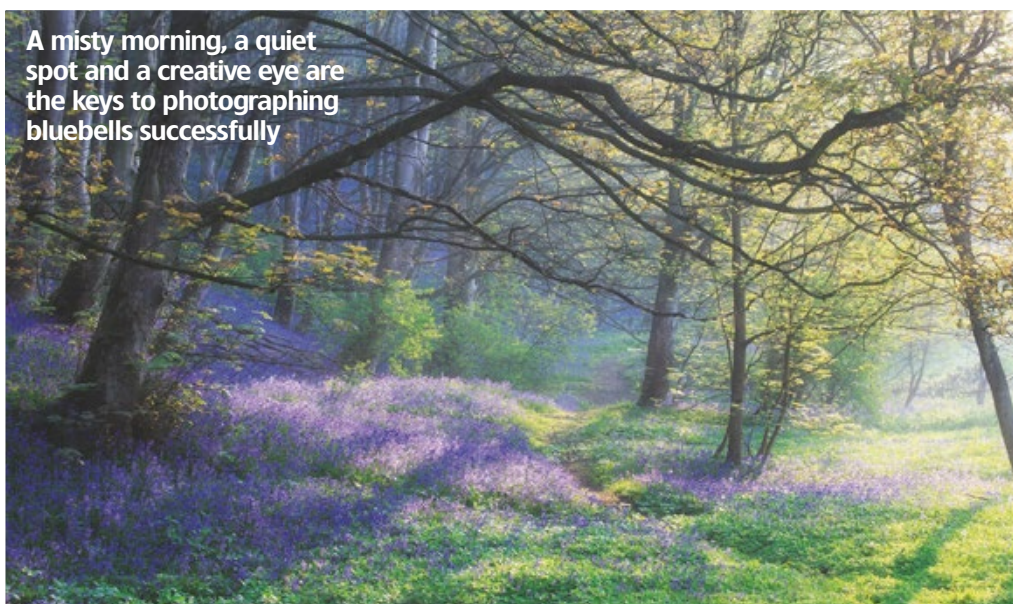
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3 Use the viewfinder to carefully seek out a good composition. It could be that the trees are balanced in the frame or forming repeating patterns. Gaps between trees help pull the viewer into the scene.

4 Don't forget to take some close-up or macro images of the intricate beauty of bluebells. Choose a healthy looking specimen that is not in direct sunlight, otherwise highlights are lost at the edges.

A misty morning, a quiet spot and a creative eye are the keys to photographing bluebells successfully




© ROBERT BIRKBY PHOTOGRAPHY



The GX80 will be available for £509, body only, and as lens-kit versions

Panasonic primes GX80 for May debut

 NEXT month, Panasonic will launch the Lumix DMC-GX80, a 16-million-pixel compact system camera featuring in-body 5-axis Dual Image Stabilisation and a 4K Photo mode. The DMC-GX7, a CSC launched in 2013, will be phased out, it has been announced.

Priced £509, body only, the GX80 sports a 3in (7.62cm), 1.04-million-dot display designed to tilt upwards by 80°, and a built-in EVF carrying a resolution of 2.764 million dots.

In a first for a Lumix G camera, the low-pass filter has been removed from the imaging sensor in a bid to maximise image quality. Panasonic claims this leads to a 10% improvement in 'limiting resolution' for 'greater clarity'.

Key features include a new, slightly smaller, shutter unit designed to

reduce shutter vibration and noise.

The shutter unit uses an electronic drive that allows users to release the mechanical shutter in situations where they previously would have 'had no choice but to use the electronic shutter [release]', explains Panasonic.

Additional features include eye-sensor AF, a top ISO of 25,600, and Post Focus – which allows the photographer to alter the focus areas of the image after taking a shot.

The 4K Photo option, which can be activated using a dedicated button, offers three modes, each designed to enable the user to extract a still image from a 4K video sequence and save it as an 8MP JPEG. This should mean photographers never miss a shot while shooting video.

Also new is the L Monochrom function that aims to produce deep

blacks reminiscent of an 'authentic black and white movie', and Light Composition, which takes multiple frames in 4K Photo and combines them into a single image, allowing the camera to prioritise specific pixels on the basis of their brightness.

'This makes it possible to produce dramatic images of low-light, high-contrast environments such as fireworks,' claims Panasonic.


Also on board is a contrast-detect AF system that aims to focus as fast as 0.07sec, and Wi-Fi connectivity for wireless control and shooting.

The GX80 will also be available with 12-32mm and 35-100mm lenses in a kit priced £729 or with a 12-32mm lens for £599.

See AP 23 April for a hands-on first look of the Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX80.



New MF DSLR lenses

 A NEW range of manual-focus lenses for DSLRs has been unveiled, aimed at both photo enthusiasts and professionals. Combining Swiss design with 'Korean precision', the 15mm f/2.4 and 11mm f/4 will be launched by Irix.

The first lens in the range – out in spring – is the 15mm f/4, which is weather-sealed and designed for disciplines such as photojournalism, landscapes and architecture.

Suitable for full-frame DSLRs, the 15-elements-in-11-groups lens features a nine-blade aperture diaphragm and close focusing down to 0.28m.

The two versions will both be available in Canon EF, Nikon F and Pentax K mounts: 'Blackstone', made of aluminium and magnesium (€695), and a lighter version called 'Firefly' (€475). UK prices are to be confirmed.



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A 'tan' version will be exclusive to John Lewis



The silver-coloured GX80 will be at Jessops stores only



Monster zoom on board Sony RX10 III

SONY has added a 25x optical zoom to the Cyber-shot DSC-RX10 III, which also features a 20.1-million-pixel, 1.0-type imaging sensor and 4K recording. Due out in April and priced £1,250, the RX10 III also boasts 1,000 frames per second slow-motion recording at 'ultra-telephoto', and a claimed AF speed of 0.09sec.

The camera's Vario-Sonnar T* lens features a nine-blade diaphragm.

Mark Weir, senior technical manager for digital imaging at Sony USA, claimed: 'The 24-600mm with an f/4 maximum bright aperture really opens up tremendous shooting opportunities... It's not just [about] reach and range, it's also tremendous image quality for both stills and video.' Weir explained that the lens is just as responsive as the one on board the RX10 II.

Additional features include macro focusing down to 3cm in wide mode and

a Bionz X image processing engine.

The anti-distortion shutter is designed to shoot at up to 1/32,000sec – with no distortion – which should be useful for sports and wildlife.

The electronic shutter aims to enable silent shooting, while the triple lens rings allow adjustment of focusing, zoom and the aperture.

The focus-hold button – which also works as a function button – is now located on the lens barrel.

Tsutomu Hamaguchi, general manager of Sony's Digital Imaging Business Group, added: 'Combining the newly developed super-telephoto lens and existing 1inch Exmor R stacked CMOS image sensor, 4K video capability and super-slow motion for both photography and videography, we believe this model offers a genuine new imaging experience which never existed before.'

Sony unveils two new full-frame lenses

SONY has confirmed the April launch of a 50mm f/1.8 and a 70-300mm full-frame lens for its E-mount system. The move expands Sony's full-frame E-mount lens family to 20.

Sony's 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G OSS – the first E-mount to carry a 300mm focal length – features two ED lens elements, a minimum focusing distance of 0.9m, maximum magnification of 0.31x, plus a Nano AR coating to minimise distortion.

Built to be dust and moisture-resistant, the

£1,150 newcomer also features built-in Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation.

Sony also says the lens delivers 'beautiful bokeh'.

Aimed squarely at photo enthusiasts and videographers, Sony's new FE 50mm f/1.8 prime lens is priced at £240.

Sony's new 50mm f/1.8 (below left) and 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 lenses



For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Tom Smallwood

YORKSHIRE



© RSPB

RSPB Seabird photography workshop

RSPB Bempton Cliffs is home to over 200,000 seabirds from March to August. It's a very exciting place for wildlife photography, with many great opportunities to capture all the species close up, from the birds on the cliff face to those in flight. There are places left on the April and May courses, so book now.

April-August, www.yorkshirecoastnature.co.uk

LONDON



© SCIENCE MUSEUM

Fox Talbot

This major exhibition at the Science Museum explores the work of William Henry Fox Talbot, and presents the birth of British photography in its industrial and social context. Discover the extent of Talbot's contribution to the new medium.

14 April-11 September, www.sciencemuseum.org.uk



© JOYCE FERDER RANKIN

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Degrees°

Spanning the Earth from 87° north to 67° south, Joyce Ferder Rankin's images capture the remarkable beauty of our natural world, as well as some of the struggles the planet's animals face as a consequence of climate change.

Until 29 April, www.flowerfield.org

Echoes of the Great War

This new exhibition at Weston Park marks 100 years since the Battle of the Somme and features evocative images of the remnants of the Western Front by photographer Peter Cattrell, alongside archival materials.

30 April-4 September, www.museums-sheffield.org.uk

SHEFFIELD



© PETER CATTRELL

Fujiholics Photowalk LONDON

Fujifilm fans in the big smoke have another chance to take part in one of the popular photowalks around the capital. The walk will start at Tate Modern, Bankside, at 10.30am and finish at 4.30pm. Full details of the route will be sent out with a map, one week before the event.

30 April, bit.ly/fujiphotowalk



© MATT HART



Viewpoint Tony Kemplen

A car-boot find leads to a new beginning for the Durst Automatica. With its automatic exposure control, it was a cutting-edge camera in its time

Durst is a name usually associated with darkroom equipment, particularly enlargers. The chances are, anyone who used a school or club darkroom from the 1960s onwards will have come across the name. Less well known are the Durst cameras. Four were made, two rollfilm and two 35mm, and all of them quite different in design.

Nowadays, we don't bat an eyelid at the thought of an automatic exposure system, but back in the 1950s, when Julius Durst designed this camera, automatic exposure control was very much at the leading edge of post-Second World War camera design. Legend has it that the young Durst got his inspiration while tinkering with some electronics he found in the wreckage of a US fighter plane that had been shot down near his native Bressanone-Brixen, in the Italian/Austrian Tyrol.

This example was picked up by my dad at a car-boot sale in the early 1990s. Looking back, that was something of a golden age for camera collectors – people were dumping their film gear as digital became affordable, and eBay was yet to be born. I don't know what he paid for it, but it wouldn't have been much.

It had been sitting on the display shelf for a couple of decades, so I reckoned it deserved an outing. Everything seemed to work, with all the shutter speeds sounding about right. Even the auto-exposure system was showing signs of life, but it is really quite limiting. Effectively, the aperture is tied to the film speed, and the camera adjusts the shutter speed to



The negatives were well exposed, but there was the appearance of stray light on some

suit. For example, ISO 200 gives an aperture of f/16, and if you want to use auto, you can take it or leave it.

A window on the top of the camera indicates the shutter speed that will be used, with a tripod symbol to alert you if the chosen speed is below 1/30sec. Fortunately, there is manual override, so a more experienced user can choose their own settings. I decided to stick to manual, although in order to see the f-numbers you have to look on the underside of the lens, which does slow things down.

While the negatives were well exposed, and the images crisp and contrasty, many of them were marred by stray light (see photo above), which on investigation appears to be coming from internal reflections in the camera body. I have seen this effect before, notably on the Soviet-era Russian Sputnik, but it was a surprise to find it on what appears to be an otherwise well-designed camera. A simple solution would be to stick a piece of thin black felt over the offending surface, which is what I will do if I decide to use the Automatica again. It would be a shame not to, as it's a classy little camera.

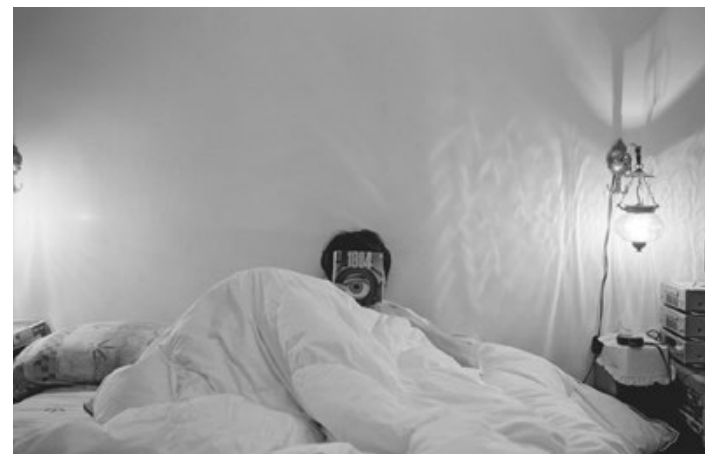
Tony Kemplen's love of photography began as a teenager and ever since he has been collecting cameras with a view to testing as many as he can. You can follow his progress on his 52 Cameras blog at 52cameras.blogspot.co.uk. You can also see more photos from the Durst Automatica at www.flickr.com/tony_kemplen/sets/72157665125685445



Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 17 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



© CHIEN-CHI CHANG/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Jet Lag

By Chien-Chi Chang, Hatje Cantz, £39.95, hardback, 116 pages, ISBN 978-3-77574-025-8

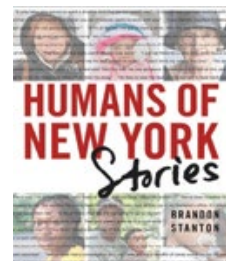


FILMS and television have glamorised the lifestyle of the international jetsetter. There seems nothing more appealing than travelling the world on a weekly basis, taking in the sights

of a variety of countries and cultures. However, the reality couldn't be more different. The pattern is simple: airport, taxi, hotel, office, hotel, taxi, airport – not quite the glamour many would like to believe. In this intriguing book, Chien-Chi Chang takes us on a strange tour of steel-and-concrete constructions, hotel rooms, flight crews and check-in counters. The black & white images create a sense of disconnect. Flickering televisions, people barely glimpsed, a shadow from some unseen building – they become the only things to anchor us to a recognisable world. This is a travel document – just not the kind of travel on which any of us would wish to embark. ★★★★★

Humans of New York: Stories

By Brandon Stanton, Macmillan, £20, hardback, 432 pages, ISBN 978-1-44729-555-6



IN THE summer of 2010, Brandon Stanton began one of the most popular blogs of recent years, 'Humans of New York'. The online project found Stanton traversing the streets of New York, engaging with passers-by and asking them for their story. He then took a photo

of those he met and uploaded them to his blog, creating a staggering document of the variety of people who inhabit such a schizophrenic city. This book, the second Stanton has produced, delves into the archives to bring more of the best blog stories and images. It's certainly a good way of circumventing the endless scrolling through the website, but that's not to say a visit to the website should be off the cards. You can see it at www.humansofnewyork.com.

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Kate Hopewell-Smith

Kate worked in creative industries and following a move out of London to raise her children, she studied photography as a hobby, which developed into a full-time business. She is a Nikon UK Ambassador and from September 2016 will be leading an intensive six-month professional photography foundation programme. www.trainingbylumiere.co.uk

Visual Perception

While it's easy for us to pay attention to the technical aspects of photography, knowing the rules of composition are just as critical, as **Kate Hopewell-Smith** explains

At the beginning of their photography journey, many people become obsessed with f-stops, shutter speeds and ISO sensitivities, thinking that mastering exposure will result in images with impact. However, this approach deals with the technical side of photography rather than the ideas and creative side.

What's missing is knowledge about composition and visual perception, which relates to how our eyes and brain work together to understand the visual whole. I studied history

of art at university, learning the principles of design and critiquing many different genres. This process resulted in a strong understanding of composition techniques and a visual language that was easily transferable to the medium of photography. So the good news is that these objective principles and skills can easily be learnt and applied, resulting in significant improvements to a photographer's portfolio.

External influences

The elements of composition you use the most will be influenced by what and



The strength of this image lies in the strong contrasts of light and dark, as well as the mood and atmosphere that the lighting provides

ALL PICTURES © KATE HOPEWELL-SMITH



This shot demonstrates the use
of shapes in a composition,
here enhanced through the
repetition of lines as well as
the contrast provided by the
strength of light



➤ where you shoot. It is easier to control the final composition when you work in a studio because you begin with an empty canvas and build the image. For those, like me, who work on location, we start with a full canvas and have to make decisions about what to include and exclude from the frame. Quite often

the lens I choose will be directly related to the composition that I am striving for.

When I photograph people on location, I often use a long focal length and the resulting compression to create soft, textured backgrounds, which helps to draw attention to the subject (texture can be a very

effective compositional device – so useful because it can be revealed through lighting and also explored through reflection, or the lack thereof).

Whenever I find myself shooting in an urban environment, I usually have to use many more compositional techniques to create images with impact, because it can be

difficult to find locations without any distractions.

Reading the image

The general definition of composition is ‘putting together using conscious thought’, and when discussed specifically in relation to photography this means ‘the arrangement of visual elements within the frame’. Critically, both imply an active and intentional role for the photographer, who must make decisions about what to include in the frame and where to place things relative to each other.

If you ever find yourself, or others, tilting your head when reviewing one of your photographs, this means the brain is struggling to ‘read’ the image successfully.

Visual elements

At the heart of composition lie visual elements – things you can see that make up the properties of art. The simplest elements are single points in the frame – for example, a person in an otherwise empty space. When a number of points are found together, they can easily be joined, perhaps unintentionally, by the eye to imply lines and shapes. The three most common shapes found and used in photography are

When I was asked to provide some headshots for this voiceover artist, it was an easy decision to use a location that provided the perfect complementary colour to her beautiful hair



Why this shot works

WHILE this shot of Prague in the Czech Republic looks simple, there are a number of compositional techniques working together to create a successful image. I divided the frame according to the rule of thirds and used the lamp in the foreground to balance the bridge in the background. There are a number of leading lines to the bridge, including the rays of sunshine, the architectural feature on the weir and the converging lines of the riverbanks. These, together with the three birds in the sky, result in a gentle circular movement for the viewer within the frame. The light and the location also result in a high-contrast, dramatic image tonally.





The use of leading and converging lines here gives a strong sense of depth and perspective

rectangles, triangles and circles, and in all cases these can be real or implied. So it follows that lines are one of the most basic elements of art and can also be one of the most dominant and potentially distracting in terms of composition. It is relatively easy to make decisions when there is only a single dominant line, but in reality you will often be faced with a large number of lines that intersect at different angles and prevent

the image having stability or a primary focus point. A very useful technique is to include leading lines to control the eye movement of the viewer and draw their attention to the point of interest rather than leading the eye away. Another great technique involves using converging lines to suggest depth and perspective – which is a critical skill in successfully translating our 3D world into a 2D graphic image. The angle



This is largely about contrasts of texture revealed through one strong shaft of sunlight to the right of the camera. I placed the girls on the right-hand side of the frame for a less predictable image



One that **nearly worked**

THIS image just falls short compositionally, which I find quite frustrating because I wanted it to be a better photograph! I like the way the curve of the bridge is mirrored in the swans' necks

and I like the light, but fundamentally there is just too much happening in the frame – the number of birds in the lower half is distracting and leads to visual unbalance.



One that **didn't work**

THE ABOVE image demonstrates a composition that simply doesn't work. The horizon line is not in the middle or on one of the thirds. The bridge is too near the frame edge, the weir results in a leading line

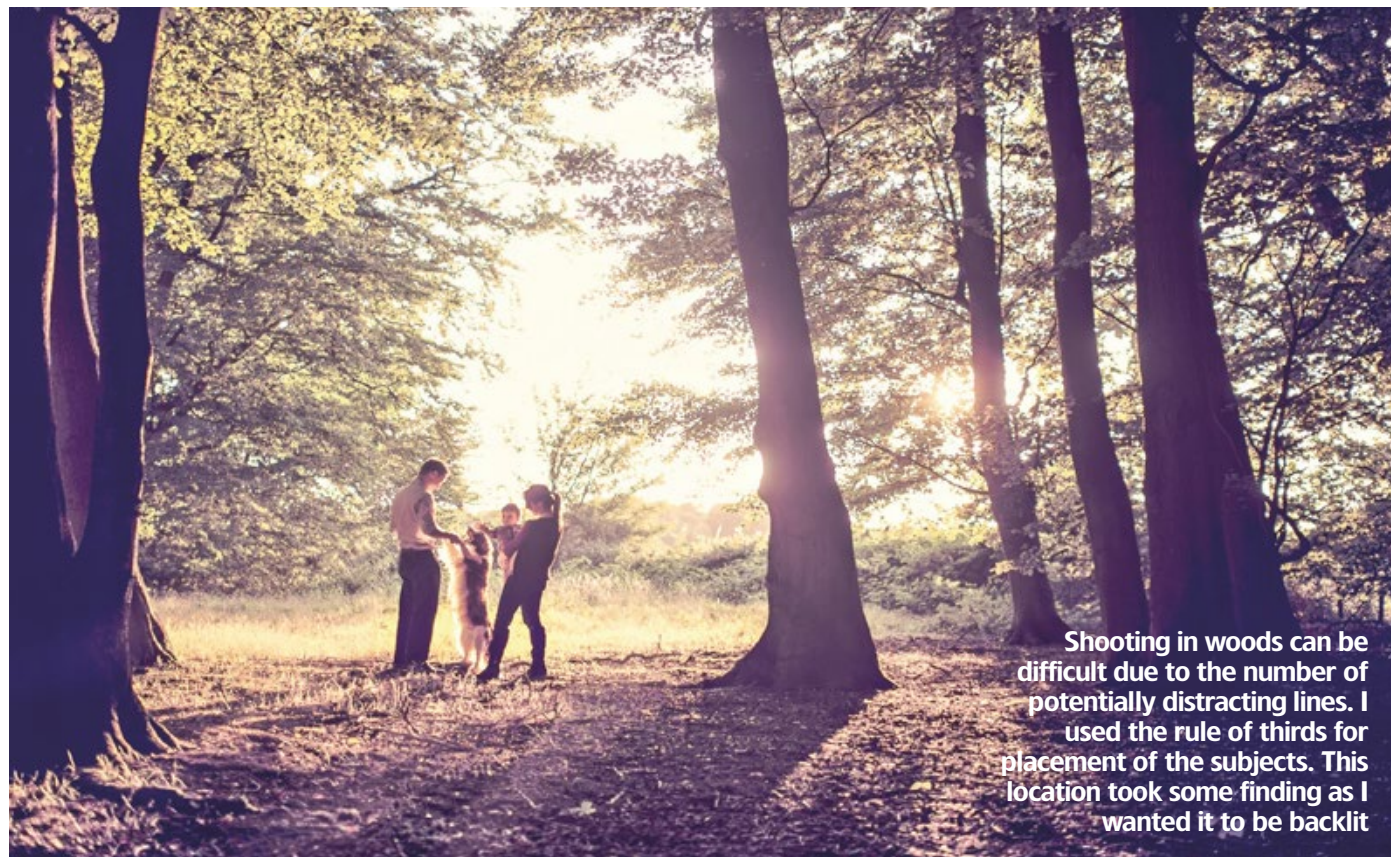
directly to the white building, which becomes a distraction, and the boat is moving towards the right-hand side of the frame, therefore leading the viewer's eye out of the image.

➤ that you stand at, compared with the lines in the frame, will have a considerable effect on perspective. This sometimes means that making changes in your position or choice of lens will make a big difference to the success of the final composition.

Harmony

There are also a number of principles that involve using the visual elements described above to create a strong compositional technique: division and emphasis; contrast, pattern and repetition; balance; symmetry; depth; perspective.

For centuries there has been an understanding that harmony can be created through the careful division of the frame. Instinct tends to mean people put things in the middle of the frame and while there is nothing wrong with this approach, it is predictable. I only tend to position the key subject centrally (thus dissecting the frame in half horizontally or vertically) if there is symmetry and the visual effect I am striving for is



Shooting in woods can be difficult due to the number of potentially distracting lines. I used the rule of thirds for placement of the subjects. This location took some finding as I wanted it to be backlit

one of harmony. Once you take the step to move the main point of interest away from the centre, you have to make a decision about where to put it.

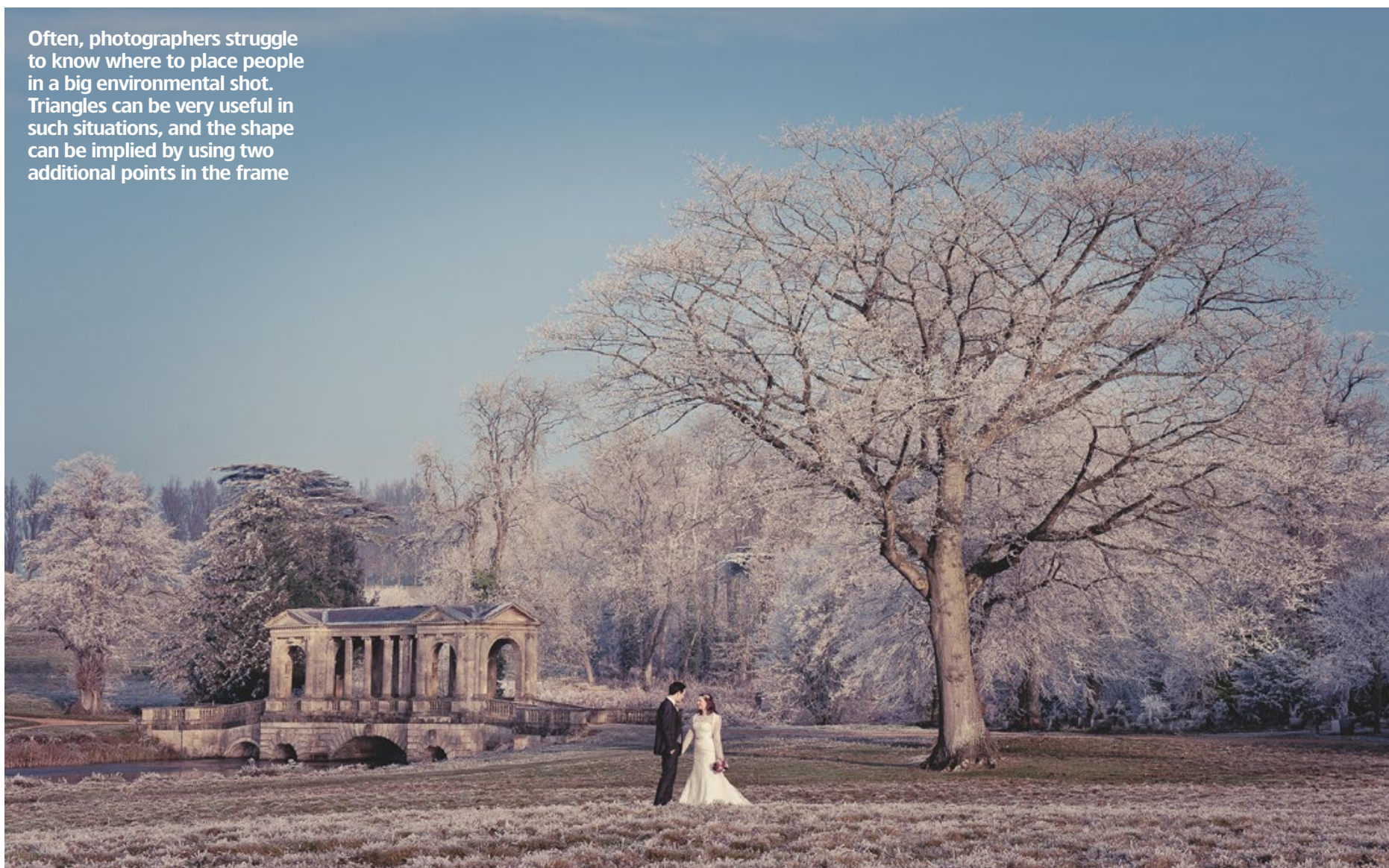
Rule of thirds

The most basic and easy-to-use method of division is the

rule of thirds, which is all about creating emphasis through placement, and is subsequently believed to result in more dynamic compositions. The guideline suggests that the frame should be divided into nine equal parts and important elements

should be placed along the lines or at the intersecting points. It is worth remembering that if the composition includes people, then their eyeline or direction of movement should be into the larger remaining section of the frame.

Often, photographers struggle to know where to place people in a big environmental shot. Triangles can be very useful in such situations, and the shape can be implied by using two additional points in the frame



The lines here create a very strong graphic element in the frame. It was then down to timing and placement of the key subjects to make a dynamic final composition



A particularly effective technique or principle is the use of balance and visual mass. This involves creating an active relationship between key elements in an image by distributing the relative 'weight' of objects across the frame. Visual mass is the principle that some elements in an image will draw greater attention despite the fact that they may be smaller than others. This is often the case when there are people or animals present in a composition – a viewer will usually give greater visual

weight to these subjects. Successfully balancing the subject with other elements in the frame will provide some compositional balance and visual interest.

Chiaroscuro

While photographers can use colour contrast in their images, we also have tonal contrast to play with and I particularly love to explore this through a technique known as chiaroscuro, which literally translates to mean light/dark.

I first studied this through the medium of painting,

although it is just as relevant for photography and refers to the use of strong contrasts of light and shadow to enhance the modelling of objects or subjects.

I love to shoot in high-contrast light and many of my favourite images use this technique regardless of the direction of light relative to the subject. The biggest tip that I can offer in relation to this technique comes from a Francis Bacon quote: 'In order for the light to shine so brightly, the darkness must be present.'

Rarely is only one visual element or principle found – often an image with impact will be constructed using a variety of compositional techniques and you might find it very useful to look back over your portfolio with this in mind. You will probably have a better understanding of why some images seem to just 'work' while others fall frustratingly short. Like any photographic technique, it takes practice and patience to become consistently good at composing images.

AP



Colour

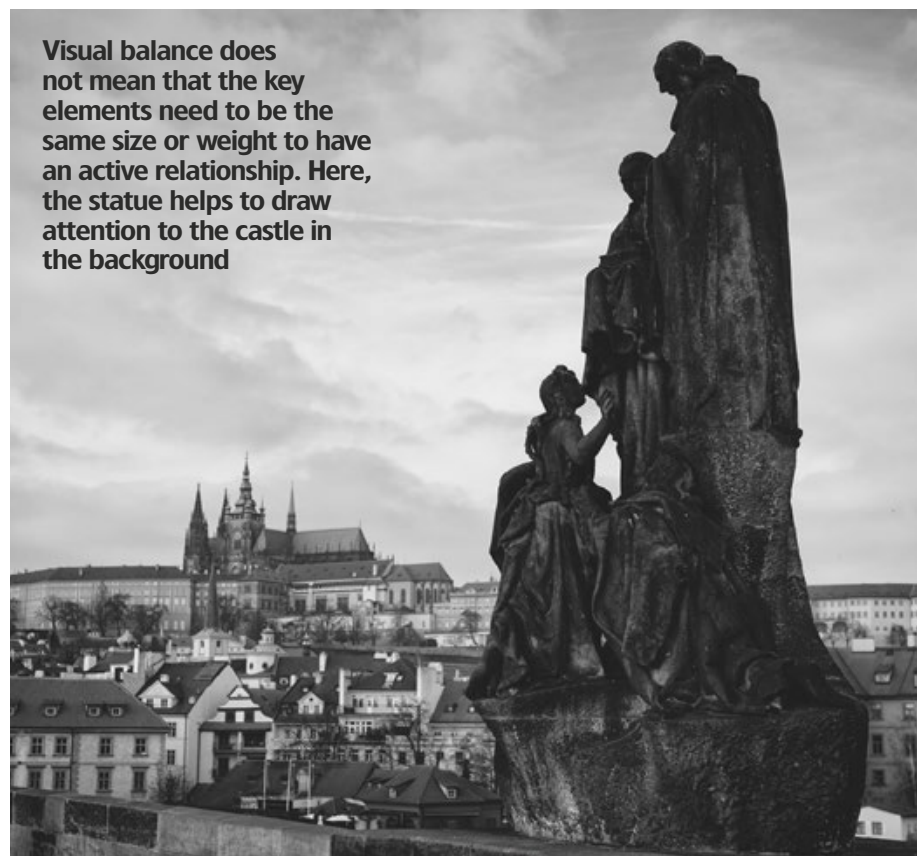
A KEY photographic element is colour, and many photographers are familiar with the three psychological dimensions of colour – hue, brightness and saturation – but understand less about how colours work together.

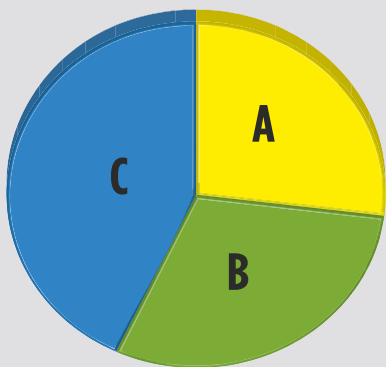
Everyone should understand

which colours are complementary (opposite each other on the colour wheel and, when seen together, provide the greatest contrast, intensity and impact), and which ones are analogous (those that are grouped next to each other on the wheel resulting in more gentle and harmonious compositions). They should also know the importance of colour-harmony ratios for balance in the frame.

For example, you should consider taking a child in a yellow dress into a field of lavender, but not one dressed in purple into the middle of a field of rapeseed. This kind of knowledge means that decisions about wardrobe and locations can be made with confidence and lead to the creation of images with impact, or ones that have a soft, harmonious palette.

Visual balance does not mean that the key elements need to be the same size or weight to have an active relationship. Here, the statue helps to draw attention to the castle in the background





In AP 26 March we asked ...

Do you think drones should be banned?

You answered

A Yes	27%
B No	30%
C It depends on the type of drone or circumstances	43%

What you said

'Only professional photographers who fully understand and comply with the relevant regulations should be using drones and they should be licensed'

'I think there is a case for licensing drones and drone operators, with perhaps a requirement to pass a test of competency in their operation. An outright ban would be excessively totalitarian, though'

'I understand [licensing] is already the case, at least for commercial usage. Extending it to private use would be analogous to licensing for bicycle riders'

'Of course they shouldn't be banned. These restrictions being placed on remote-controlled quad copters are slowly destroying a very popular hobby and industry'

'I think they should be licensed so that there is a clear line of accountability both in terms of their safe use and the circumstances of use to which they are put'

This week we ask...

How much do you think about composition before taking a photo?

Vote online www.amateurphotographer.co.uk



Tim Peake @astro_timpeake

This week we couldn't help but be in awe of the amazing photos astronaut Tim Peake has shot from space. Literally out of this world!



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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Camera skills

We use the cameras and the lenses that we can afford, or in some cases, we overstretch ourselves to buy the latest model that has better low-light performance, more pixels, or a new improved video mode. Few amateur photographers have the budget, or can justify spending thousands on the latest equipment, but we make choices.

Pick a favourite photo, the year, and now look at the best photographs from that year. I have always liked the 2010 Taylor Wessing Portrait Photography winner 'Huntress with Buck' by David Chancellor (above right). It is somewhat controversial, showing a 14-year-old girl on horseback with a buck she has killed. But it is striking, and I would be very happy if I could capture something similar. It was shot on film, in medium format, on a Mamiya 7II. This camera can be picked up now from second-hand camera shops and internet auction sites for the price of a mid-range DSLR.

Think about that for a moment; your favourite photos, the ones you wished you had seen, been there for, or thought of first, were all captured with equipment that is outdated. Rather than be seduced by the



© DAVID CHANCELLOR

hype, I am going to spend more time looking through back issues of *Amateur Photographer*, and searching through auction sites and camera shops for the equipment that used to be far out of reach. Time to test my skill rather than the limits of the latest technology.

Richard Eyers, via email

A good point, Richard. It sounds like you will enjoy our special second-hand special issue, on sale 19 April.

Incidentally, the call for entries for the Taylor Wessing Portrait Prize 2016 will appear on www.npg.org.uk, from early May – Nigel Atherton, Editor



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Quality issues

I am a happy Nikon user and have a D610 and D750 (subject to recall), but cannot support Professor Newman's views on quality issues (AP 26 March). While it is true that many manufacturers have had to recall products, the airbag problem on various makes of cars is still fresh in the mind; the failure to correctly produce and fit a shutter to a camera is akin to making a car with a faulty steering wheel.

While the professor doesn't say it, his remarks advocate a return to the old car-manufacturing days, when it was deemed satisfactory for

bits to fail, or fall off cars.

What is needed is additional testing before products are released, rather than the rush to bring to market the latest camera model in the hope of moving ahead of the competition.

If any company reaches a point where its reputation is smeared, it will be in serious trouble. Many of the members of the camera club, of which I am a member, are Nikon supporters; it would be foolish of Nikon to try their patience to breaking point.

Geoff France, West Yorkshire

The crux of Professor Newman's article was that

even additional testing before the release of the D750 would not necessarily have detected the issue at all. We don't know what proportion of the cameras are affected, but if only 1 out of 100, for example, shows this specific issue, then Nikon would need to build and test several hundred pre-production models to catch it. If it only affects 1 in 1000 cameras, then the chances of detecting it in pre-production testing becomes very slim indeed. Obviously, we'd all love to have perfectly performing cameras out of the box,

but any mass-production quality-management process struggles to pick up the very rarely occurring problems, even if they turn out to be highly visible to the end user under the wrong conditions – **Andy Westlake, technical editor**

Retro styling

I read Michael Topham's review of the Fujifilm X-Pro2 (AP 12 March) with great interest. As a committed Fuji user who owns an X-T1 and X-Pro1, I might have been persuaded to buy an X-Pro2. I went to the Photography Show at the NEC, Birmingham, recently to handle one. I'm sure it is a superb piece of kit as the review concludes, but I realised that it is capable of image quality that far exceeds my needs.

My existing Fuji cameras more than meet the standards for picture libraries and for illustrating magazine features, so, I'm resisting the urge. I wonder whether manufacturers will eventually find that they are offering technology that only a few photographers actually need. I accept that image quality is not the only refinement this camera can

boast. Sales figures will tell, no doubt.

However, my point on Mr Topham's review concerns his comment about selecting the ISO value on the X-Pro2. Surely a dial on the top-plate is the 'traditional' way? It may be a bit fiddly, but appropriate for a camera with such wonderful retro styling.

**Chris Poole,
Gloucestershire**

It's good to read you had a chance to handle the X-Pro2 at the recent Photography Show, Chris. But, as you say, if you feel that your current X-T1 and X-Pro1 are still up to the job, there seems little reason to upgrade.

There are some key areas where the X-Pro2 outshines the X-Pro1, as described in my review, and after talks with Fujifilm representatives at the show, it seems the uptake of the camera has been particularly good (but, they're always going to say that, of course). The proof will be in the camera

sales figures, and we'll be keeping an eye on these over the coming months.

To answer your comment about the ISO dial, it's one of those love-it-or-hate-it controls. Personally, I would much prefer to control the ISO the old way via the quick menu, which is something Fujifilm has decided to leave out. I can't deny that controlling the sensitivity via a top-plate dial is more traditional, but during my prolonged spell of testing I found that I would unintentionally adjust the shutter speed instead of the ISO if I hadn't lifted the dial high enough. In an ideal world, Fujifilm would let users control ISO by the top-plate and via the quick menu, giving us the option of both.

Michael Topham, deputy technical editor



Fujifilm's X-Pro2

In next week's issue On sale Tuesday 19 April



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Technique PERSONAL PROJECT



Russ Barnes

A dedicated British landscape photographer, Russ tries to infuse an artistic approach into his photography and packs lots of different creative approaches into his work. Here, he takes a break from his usual subject matter in order to test his skills and create something different. See more on his website www.russbarnes.co.uk.

KIT LIST



◀ Wideangle lens

The first lens that most photographers would pack for wildlife would be a telephoto, but pigeons allow you to get really close so a wideangle is fantastic fun.



◀ Bread

If you want to get close to city pigeons, there is one way that's guaranteed to win you friends: food. Loaves of bread are cheap and allow you to be embedded in the action.



The lunch club

With poor weather conditions hampering his creativity, landscape photographer **Russ Barnes** was forced to look a little closer to home during his lunch break

A new challenge led Russ to photograph the local colony of pigeons during his lunch break

These 'grubby-looking grey birds' provided the ideal subjects for Russ

Last autumn was a mixed bag for photographers, depending, as always, on where you lived in the UK. From my base in the Midlands it didn't go well, and given my landscape photographer credentials that was something of a disaster. Weeks of dense cloud and endless rain ultimately resulted in record floods across parts of the country. When you build up the possibilities of a new season in your mind, it can often lead to disappointment later, and lowering our expectations is not something we're good at as photographers.

Feeling unfulfilled and cheated

As a result, I was left feeling unfulfilled and cheated by a whole season but worst of all, my artistic confidence and inspiration were on the floor – again! Action was required.

Usually, when I arrive at that juncture, I know that changing things can be a great way to spark a new interest. This time, I wanted something that was a departure from landscape but was still connected to the environment in some way; something that would link to my overall portfolio, while providing a new challenge.

Having a day job in a city centre can be a painful existence as a landscape photographer, but for me at least there is a canal, which meanders past the university where I work in Leicester. It's a nice distraction for a lunchtime walk, and there's certainly no shortage of wildlife, with as many swans as you'll find at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Lots of people photograph the swans but frankly, while they're beautiful birds, they glide around not doing very much else.

A new challenge

I've done these walks up and down the canal for years and marvelled at the speed, agility and sheer numbers of the city pigeons, which congregate to beg from the riverside visitors. There are a

◀ Camera

I used a Nikon Df DSLR, and mainly smaller prime lenses, to shoot the project. I figured it was a less intimidating package. It didn't seem to spook the birds, anyway.



◀ Filters

Remember to take options such as a polariser or ND filter. Slowing shutter speeds below 1/2sec ensures that you can record the flow of movement, rather than purely static captures.



◀ Recognisable jacket

If you return to the same spot every day with a signature coloured jacket, the birds will gather around you because they will come to recognise and trust you.



Engage your audience with comedy

NEVER work with children or animals, they say, but the one thing you tend to get with both is a level of humour. I never really set out to make this feature part of my series, but pigeons are just made for comedy in everything they do, from their walk to their general collective behaviour. It's a hard person who can resist their perpetual half-smile, too – they make great subjects.

Of course, landing the occasional golden moment of comedy can require considerable patience and concentration. It was on those days I'd decided to shoot individual portraits that particular behaviours became more obvious.

Eventually, you are rewarded with unexpected moments. However, I had to take literally thousands of frames until I landed the sort of image I was hoping for – something that might only happen for a couple of seconds, but which provided a real connection.

The golden objective with all my photography is to try to engage the viewer for more than a passing moment. Often this is more difficult to achieve with my static landscapes, but with these birds it was a real opportunity for me to produce something attention-grabbing.



➤ couple of colonies numbering several hundred birds, which is often a visual treat when they fill the sky together. So I decided that my next challenge could focus on the story of these birds. After all, no one (well, hardly anyone) shoots these rather grubby-looking grey birds.

Pigeons are probably not most people's favourite wildlife, being more akin to 'rats with wings' than anything else. That appealed to me because I thought there was possibly something to be discovered here, and although the work might not be unique, it would at least be different from my usual fare.

My instinct served me well. Over the following days, which turned into weeks and then months, I became incredibly

attached to these birds. Despite having casually observed them for a few years, what became apparent at closer quarters were their human characteristics.

I knew that, somehow, I needed to capture this side of them: the pack mentality while still acting as individuals, and their obvious greedy yet seemingly caring side. There's the way they huddle together for warmth yet demand personal space, their hierarchy, the absolute comedy of their behaviour and how incredibly predictable they can become.

I discovered quickly that there was a big story to tell and one I've probably only just scratched the surface of, too. But that's the point of the best kind of photography, isn't it – story-telling in pictures.

RUSS'S TOP TIPS



1 Observe your subject

Observation is critical. Behaviour can be very predictable indeed, but it only becomes so if you spend time observing your subject, and understanding their traits. I spent more than two years casually observing these pigeons before I started photographing them.



2 Consider perspective

I managed to entice the birds onto the top of some steps so I could get shots at ground level without having to lie down to do so. This also created an entirely different perspective from the usual overhead images, giving the feel that I was right among them.



3 Get close

If you want to really engage your observer, wide angles are a fantastic way to put your audience in the story. I worked hard to try to make certain images feel like the viewer was right there in the pack. It's not an easy angle to achieve, and lots of patience is required.



Consider different angles rather than just shooting above the subject

Exciting but challenging, too

It felt new and exciting, it grabbed my imagination and suddenly the dark clouds of autumn fell away. Landscapes became a passing interest and I couldn't wait for lunchtime every day to get out there and see what I could get. But that wasn't all; I decided I didn't want the project to be too easy, so challenged myself to shoot the whole thing with manual-focus lenses.

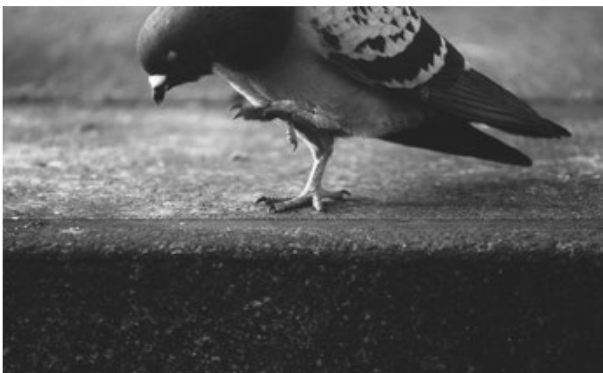
Even now, I'm not sure whether that was a step too far. I shot thousands of frames, but my 'keeper' rate was about 25% or less. However, when I got one, the satisfaction factor was definitely increased. This was great sport if nothing else, and was pushing me right outside my comfort zone. It was, quite frankly, perfect.



Try to capture a story that delivers fresh perspectives and insight, while retaining that vital artistic feel



Russ became incredibly attached to these birds over the months he shot the project



4 Set a daily challenge

With this project, I found it was much easier to try to deliver one type of photograph on each shoot. For example, I would narrow the project to just photographing, say, pigeon feet for a whole session, ensuring that I fulfilled specific aspects of my plan.



5 Let shadows guide you

Winter is ideal for long periods of low sun, which gives great opportunities for shadow play, even at midday. I settled on mono to accentuate the visual conundrum that this helped to develop, allowing the artistic aspect of the series to flourish.



6 Shoot the whole story

Death may feel hard to photograph, and perhaps unusually voyeuristic, but it's difficult to ignore, and very much about the circle of life. When tastefully done, it can add a powerful end to a story. I felt this kind of image somehow helped to complete my study.



To make the project more of a challenge, Russ opted to shoot only with manual focus throughout

➤ I also elected for mono in this project because I thought there were opportunities for repeating patterns and for plays on light and shadow. I believe these are elements which are accentuated with the use of black & white where the 'distraction' of colour is removed.

Another universe

Unexpectedly, this project really put me into another universe. I felt like I had immersed myself in a new society and, as the individual characters of certain birds revealed themselves over the weeks (I kept returning to the same 50 yards of space, as did they), this became a significant side benefit because I gained a new respect for their challenging existence.

It soon started to feel like it reached beyond a photography project, though, because there was another story – the people who came to feed them every day. I started to photograph the birds, too, but somehow it felt invasive, so I scrapped that idea and restricted my scope to the birds, just observing the people instead.

It became obvious that these were important relationships for the visitors, tenuous friendships, even, and I began to understand why. The pigeons gave something back; there was mutual understanding there, somewhere. When I fed them myself, they didn't fly off or run away, and they often allowed me to get within inches of them with my camera.

In the end, the Lunch Club wasn't about pigeons per se, or even story telling. It was more about unlikely relationships or creating bonds where you least expect to find them. The experience has taught me that photographic inspiration can be found almost anywhere.



Mob rules

WHEN I initially embarked on this project, I was certainly seeking out new inspiration and to test myself somewhat beyond my normal subject matter. One of my main objectives in shooting a large passel of pigeons was to deliver images that had visual confusion, iterated patterns or repetitive shapes. Just as important, I was looking to have some fun – something that is all too easily forgotten in photography these days.

It's a classic kids' trick to rush a mass of birds on the ground and watch them take to the air together. It's probably a secret desire for many adults, too. However, standing in the middle of them when that happens is either

an exhilarating or terrifying experience, depending on your personal disposition.

It's not every day you get to observe and photograph wildlife in real volumes at such close quarters as this – try doing that with some more exotic wildlife. To record such moments, I ensured I held my finger over the shutter release at all times and kept the camera in a high-speed shooting mode.

While most pigeons are not particularly nervous around humans, they do respond to each other in a split second. When they take to the air, it's a cloud of feathers and a massive downdraught – and great entertainment!

Focal length: 70mm · Exposure: F/11, 1/160 sec



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Thornham

KIT LIST



Tripod

▲ In low light, a tripod is a must for ensuring sharp shots at low ISOs, but even more so if you're working at low angles when it always seems harder to keep the horizon straight.



Filters

A set of ND graduated filters will help your camera cope with the high dynamic range when shooting around the hours of sunrise and sunset. A hard grad is ideal for the clear horizons here.



Wideangle lens

Although a standard zoom such as a 24-70mm is useful at Thornham, I find that a wideangle lens gives you the option of getting closer and making more of any interesting foregrounds.

Located on the Norfolk coast, Thornham is a perfect spot to visit, as **Justin Minns** explains

THE NORTH Norfolk coast is a wonderful mix of endless sandy beaches fringed with windswept dunes, acres of wide-open salt marsh teeming with wildlife, picturesque harbours, fishing boats, flint cottages and, of course, big skies. Thornham is a small village on the edge of the salt marsh on the western end of the coast. It has a sleepy harbour that's all but deserted, and features a photogenic coal barn and a scattering of boats moored along the creek that meanders its way from here across the marsh to the sea.

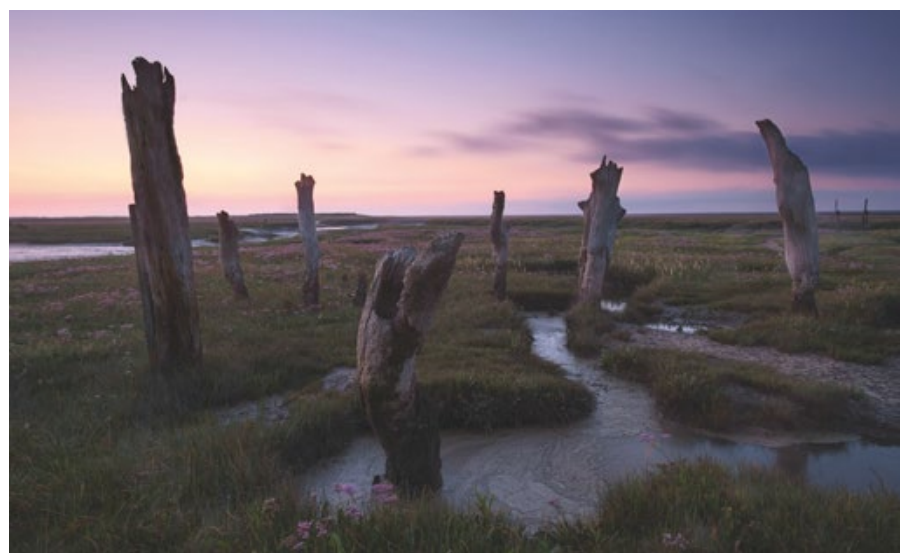
Access

Part of the charm of the north Norfolk coast is its relative isolation. Thornham lies on the A149, which winds its way along the coastline all the way from King's Lynn to Cromer. From the village, follow Staithe Lane to the small, free car park at the very end. It's conveniently placed a few steps from the harbour. A ten-minute walk along the Norfolk Coast Path from here will take you out to the dunes and the beach. There are arguably better beaches to be found a few minutes' drive east along the coast road, where you'll find Brancaster's huge sandy expanse. Five minutes in the other direction takes you to Hunstanton, with its distinctive striped cliffs and unusual rock formations. Both Brancaster and Hunstanton have large car parks within a short walk of the beaches.

It's always a good idea to check the tides before visiting Thornham. During spring high tides, Staithe Lane floods, leaving the car park cut off until the water subsides. The same is true of the road to Brancaster beach and many other car parks along the coast, so be aware of this when you find a spot to park.



Above: In summer, the setting sun brings the colours of the salt marsh alive



Right: The coal barn and small colourful fishing boats are excellent focal points



Justin Minns

Justin is a professional landscape photographer specialising in atmospheric images of East Anglia, as well as running workshops in the region. www.justinminns.co.uk

Shooting advice

THORNHAM is an interesting place to shoot all year round. Misty autumn scenes and frosty winter mornings have a lot of atmosphere, but the long, peaceful summer evenings are my favourite time to visit this part of the world.

The coast here faces north, so in summer the sun rises and sets over the sea, and the salt marsh comes alive with a haze of purple sea lavender and pink sea thrift that add a splash of colour to proceedings.

The coal barn makes an obvious photographic subject, but look closer and there's much more to be found. The riverbank is lined with rickety jetties, where colourful old boats lie stranded in the mud at low tide.

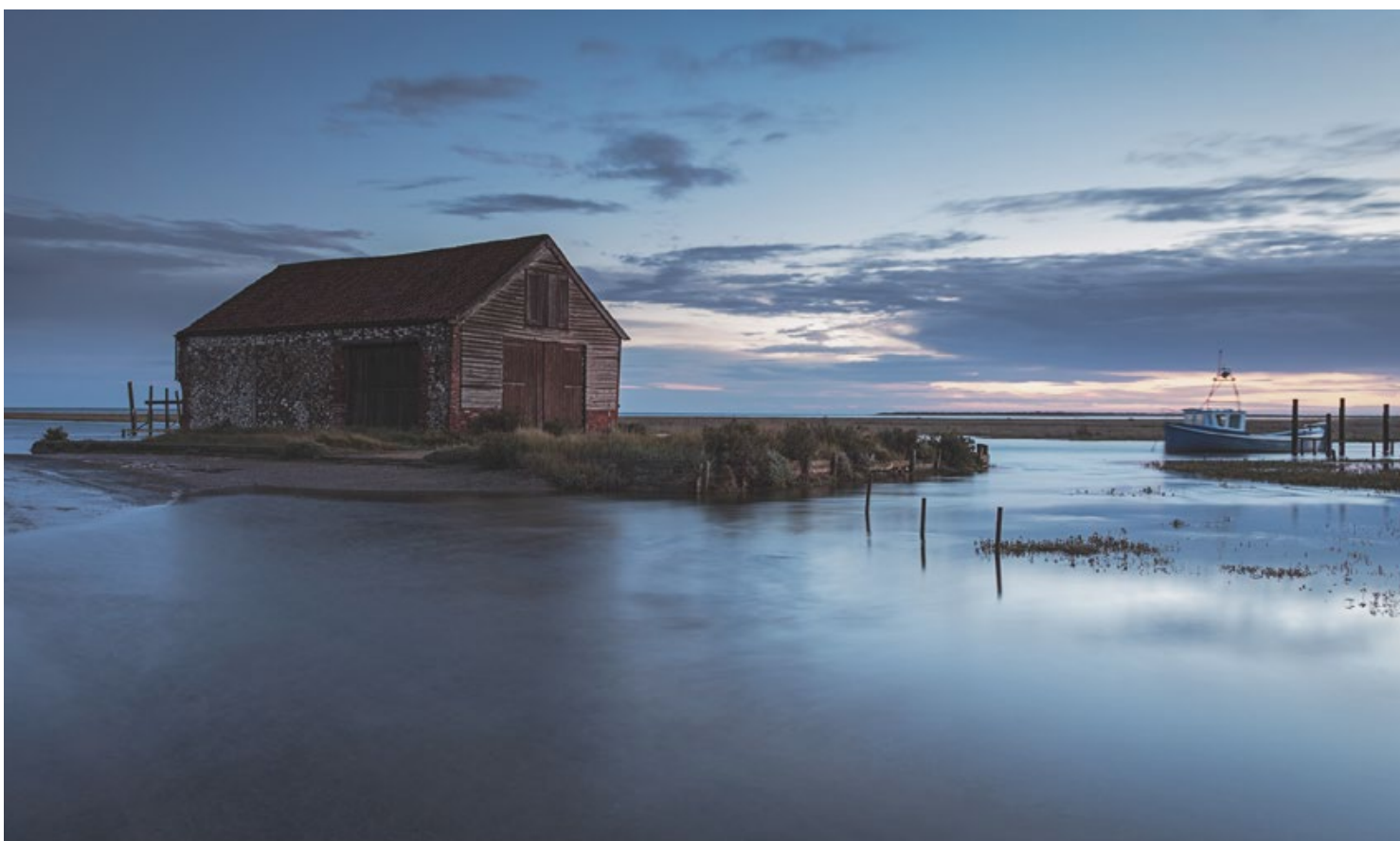
The marsh is dotted with reflective pools and carved by twisting creeks that are spanned by makeshift bridges, all of which make for great foreground material – and are even interesting subjects in their own right. Just beyond the car park, a number of gnarled wooden stumps rise mysteriously from the salt marsh. During spring high tides, these are completely surrounded by water, further adding to their mystery.

Food and Lodging

THIS part of the Norfolk coast has plenty of places to stay. There are several holiday cottages and B&Bs in Thornham itself, while a wider choice of accommodation can be found in Hunstanton, which is only a five-minute drive away. Thornham has tea rooms, a deli café and three pubs, all of which offer both food and accommodation. The Lifeboat Inn is a dog-friendly traditional pub serving locally sourced food and a good choice of beers.



These wooden stumps rising out of the salt marsh make for an interesting composition





Get closer to that *perfect shot*

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Flash delirium

Street photographer **Dougie Wallace**, otherwise known as 'Glasweegee', talks to **Jade Severs** about his project documenting the world of Premier Padmini taxis in Mumbai, India, using flash

Glaswegian photographer Dougie Wallace has gained a reputation as one of the UK's leading street photographers. Known for his brash and bright portraits of drunken revellers on the streets of Shoreditch in London and Blackpool, and he has a distinct style that is garish and raw, leaving nothing to the imagination.

For his project *Road Wallah*, Dougie turned his attention to the streets of Mumbai in India, and its black and yellow cabs, the Premier Padmini taxi. First introduced to

Mumbai in the 1960s, these brightly adorned vehicles, with their psychedelic and patterned interiors, were once omnipresent, the streets heaving with the sight and sound of more than 60,000 cabs.

It was over a four-year period, with more than 17 visits to Mumbai, that Dougie gave the taxi drivers and their passengers a taste of his infamous street-photography style, seeking to capture the everyday humanity amid the chaos of the city. 'I was jumping at the taxis at traffic lights with these three flashguns,' reveals Dougie. 'And then I would



Dougie grew up in Glasgow, hence his moniker Glasweegee. Recognised for his distinct, direct style of expressive street photography, his work has been featured in *The New York Times*, and Germany's *Stern*, among others. His book, *Road Wallah*, is published by Dewi Lewis, priced £35.



start shooting through the side window. I didn't ask anyone's permission, either.'

His bold ambush technique reveals some thoroughly frank portraits, capturing emotions and expressions before the subject becomes self-conscious and puts up a guard. 'I was trying to catch them unawares,' says Dougie. 'I would concentrate on capturing somebody's face, or I tried to capture a moment, for example, when somebody jumped in the cab, or when the taxi stopped outside Mumbai Central station and I'd shoot them. Or I'd be shooting them when the driver has to give them change.'

On other occasions, Dougie would turn his attention to the inside of the cab, taking a ride and



Above: Dougie has referred to these elaborate taxis as 'Bollywood disco bars on wheels'

photographing at the same time, shooting through the window or windscreen at the unfolding scenes outside. Whether shot from inside or out, the resultant expressions of the drivers, passengers and passers-by span a wide spectrum – from surprise and shock to irritation and exhaustion.

Method in the madness

Dougie has cleverly highlighted these in all their glorious detail, thanks to his use of three flashguns, as mentioned previously. 'One is off-camera, connected with a cable cord, and two are on brackets on my Nikon D800 – one pointed straight down the lens and the other coming off a little bit to the side,' he explains. 'Then I'm actually just trying to hit them with this flash

Far left: The streets and people of Mumbai serve as a dynamic and intense backdrop

'I was often moving as the taxi was moving, so I'd have to compose my images as I took them, concentrating on faces and expressions'

and capture their expressions. The driver is only about 8in [20cm] away from me, as they're really small cars.

'The windscreen also goes straight up, so you're shooting straight through the glass, unlike modern cars' windcreens which are sloped, so that helps eliminate any reflections.'

Dougie's use of flash is crucial in achieving the overall look and feel of his portraits, but the intensity of three flashguns meant that shooting during the middle of the day was near impossible, as the flash would wash out and overexpose the already

bright ambient light. So he made the decision to shoot only between 5.30pm and 6.30pm. 'That last hour of light is the best time to get the shots, as you can balance the ambient light,' he explains. 'You get a nice light, plus you sometimes get the setting sun acting as a backlight.'

On the fly

Shooting with such a large set-up, as well as juggling the dodgem of taxis to get his shots, meant Dougie had to compose his images as he took them. 'I was often moving as the taxi was moving, so I'd have to compose my images as





Dougie's project was four years in the making and saw him risking life and limb by dashing out onto the busy roads

➤ I took them, concentrating on faces and expressions,' he says. Not only were the subjects reacting to his camera and flashguns, but they were also reacting to Dougie's presence, as he would shoot extremely close to them, almost becoming a part of the picture by proxy. Yet the images don't feel claustrophobic, thanks to his 18-35mm wideangle lens, which lets subjects have breathing space among the often cluttered and colourful backgrounds.

With *Road Wallah*, Dougie hasn't fallen into the trap of photographing the stereotypical clichés of somewhere exotic. Indeed, there is nothing trite about this series, which offers a fresh perspective on the beating heart of Mumbai and what, quite literally, drives the city. 'A lot of the images you see of Mumbai are very much travel photography in style,' says Dougie. 'I wanted to shoot something different, something a bit more conceptual.'

What began as a simple premise of photographing a driver through a windscreen now holds more significance than first realised: thanks to government legislation introduced in 2015 designed to curb pollution levels, the Premier Padmini has been consigned to the scrap heap. With the taxis all but gone from the streets of Mumbai, *Road Wallah* not only presents a glimpse into the city's chaos and commotion but also serves as a final farewell to the iconic cab. **AP**



Due to the smash-and-grab nature of the images, Dougie had to compose his images on the fly

FURTHER READING

Stags, Hens & Bunnies, A Blackpool Story

Published by Dewi Lewis, £28



Dougie takes to the walkways of Blackpool to capture the often hedonistic and oddly captivating stag and hen dos that stagger through the town's neon-soaked streets. Through his lens, the subjects' rites of passage take on a strange quality that is at once repulsive but also strangely alluring.

Shoreditch Wild Life

Hoxton Mini Press, second-hand prices vary

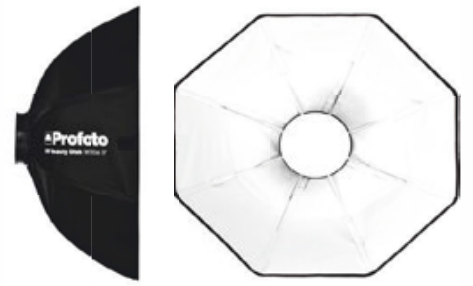


London's Shoreditch is a strange melting pot of the painfully hip and fashionably old. Dougie's images reveal a strange and decadent 'interzone' that hosts a variety of cultures, generations and ethnic backgrounds. You may need to do a little searching around to get hold of this compact book, which is now out of print, but it's worth it.



AP 7 July 2012

We spoke to Dougie back in 2012, just as he was gaining recognition. Perhaps most notable is his quote: 'I'm not sure if there's anything I wouldn't photograph. Pretty much anything is fair game.'



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Saskatchewan

The light grass contrasts beautifully against the bruised sky in this Southern Gothic inspired image. The lone horse to the right of the barn is a striking addition to the scene.

Canon EOS 70D, 18-135mm, 1/64sec at f/10, ISO 500, tripod



Craig Boehm, Canada



Craig has always been interested in severe weather and in 2012 he went on his very first storm chase, shooting photos with a Fujifilm FinePix camera. He was lucky enough to witness an amazing storm on this chase, but the photos were rather less than desired. At this point Craig decided he would definitely need to upgrade his gear along with his photography skills. Six months later he bought his first DSLR and has not looked back since. Craig loves to shoot extreme weather due to the unique challenge it brings. No two storms are the same, and with ever-changing lighting he really has to be on his game to get that perfect shot.

Regina

2 What works so well here is the jarring contrast between the golden wheat and the dark foreboding sky
Canon EOS 70D, 18-135mm, 1/80sec at f/10, ISO 320, tripod

Glasnevin

3 This storm packed winds upwards of 60mph, together with some of the most torrential rain Craig has ever experienced
Canon EOS 70D, 18-135mm, 1/8sec at f/10, ISO 400, tripod

Moose Jaw

4 The appeal for Craig here were the windows and door, giving the appearance of a face gasping at the lightning taking place around it
Canon EOS 70D, 18-135mm, 1/40sec at f/14, ISO 400, tripod





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1



Geoff Kell, London



Geoff's primary interest lies in nature and landscape photography – something that has been innate since visiting Scotland as a child. Those astounding 'big views' had quite an impact, and ever since, Geoff has been attempting to recapture that feeling of awe in his work. In the future, Geoff is looking to develop his skills further to best represent the things he sees.

Antarctic Moonrise

1 Geoff has captured a classic contrast of forms here, with the irregular mountains and the smooth orb of the moon
Canon EOS 50D, 70-200mm, 1/200sec at f/4, ISO 400

Deception

2 Deception Island can be found off the Antarctic Peninsula and is home to many man-made remnants from a whaling station
Canon EOS 50D, 17-40mm, 1/60sec at f/16, ISO 100, ND grad

2





Forge Island Sunrise 1

3 Here we see the shy beginnings of sunrise over the landscape, a theme that continues in the following shot

Canon EOS 50D, 70-200mm, 1/5sec at f/16, ISO 100, tripod

Forge Island Sunrise 2

4 The burst of light through the clouds really lifts this scene and the dark clouds add to the overall low-key mood

Canon EOS 50D, 17-40mm, 1/6sec at f/16, ISO 100, ND grad



Evening Class

Photoshop guru **Martin Evening** sorts out your photo-editing and post-processing problems

How to change the white balance

THIS photograph, by Anthony Jackson, was taken using a Ricoh Caplio GX100 at 15secs, f/2.7 and 100 ISO.

Because the photograph was underexposed by 2 stops, it required a lot of lightening in post-production, which exaggerated the native noise signature. Under the

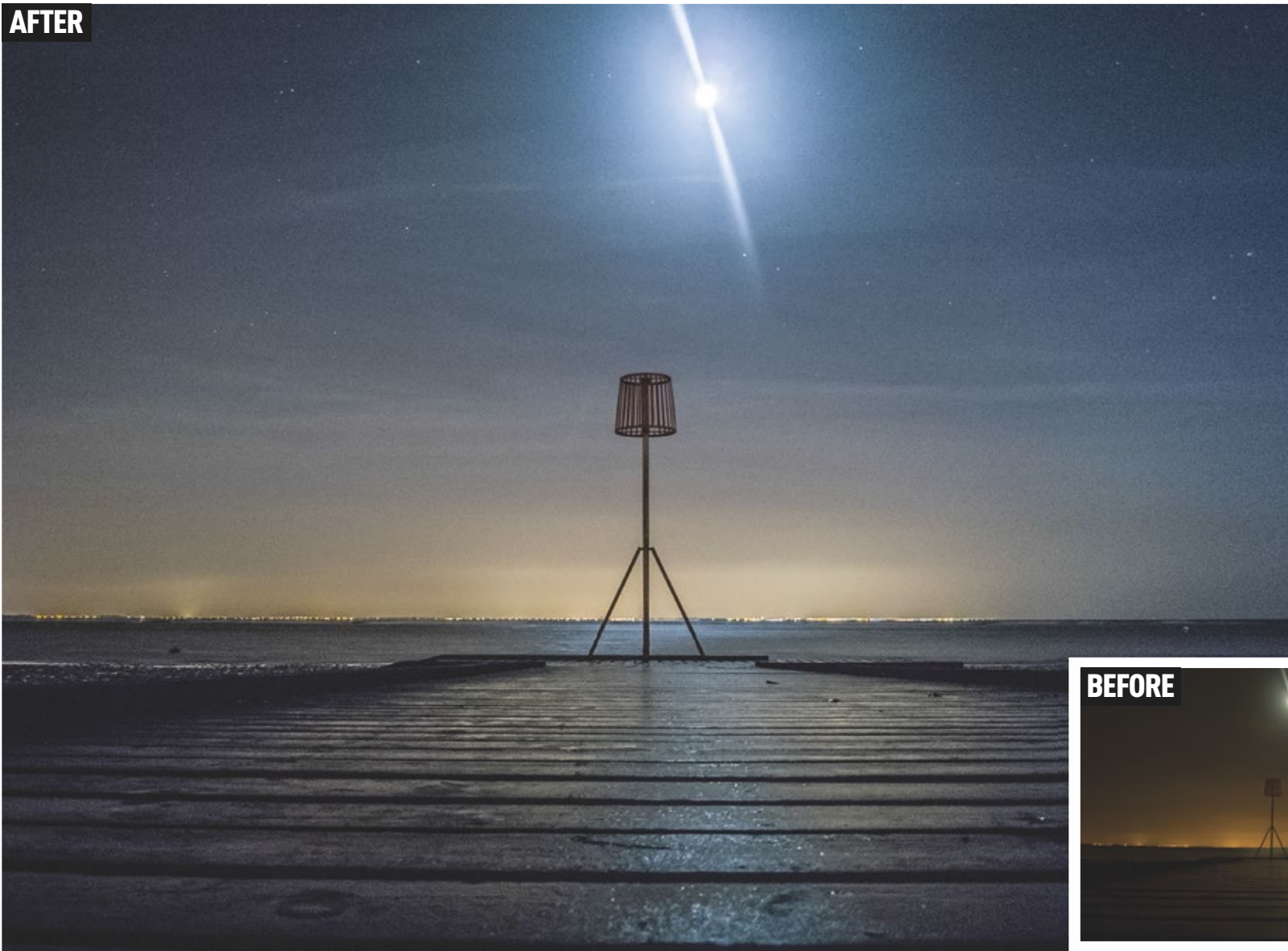
circumstances, it might have been better to set the ISO setting to 400 and shoot using the same exposure.

The main thing I wanted to show here was how adjusting the white balance setting for a raw image can dramatically affect the appearance of the photograph.

Submit your images

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AFTER



BEFORE



1 Apply Basic panel tone corrections

The first step was to lighten the image. I opened the photo in Camera Raw and lightened the Exposure, setting this to +2.45. I set the Highlights slider to -100 to preserve highlight detail, then fine tuned the remaining tone adjustment slider settings.



2 Adjust the white balance

The original white balance setting created a warm-looking image. This emphasised the warmth of the city lights in the distance. In situations such as this, there is not necessarily a right or wrong setting. In this step, I applied a Tungsten preset setting to make the image appear cooler.



3 Reduce the noise

Finally, I added +100 Clarity to add definition, and reduced the Vibrance slightly. In the Detail panel, I set the Luminance noise slider to +40 and the Color noise slider to +62. These were the optimum settings to reduce the noise. I set the Color Smoothness slider to +100 to help remove the larger colour artefacts.



BEFORE



AFTER

How to remove haze

I LOVE the composition in this landscape photograph by reader, MB. The view looking down into the river valley captures the landscape in a beautiful late evening light.

Photographing into the sun has picked up the rich colour contrast in the light and shade. As a consequence of this, the backlighting has emphasised the atmospheric haze, and

introduced some lens flare artefacts. The following steps show how I was able to apply Camera Raw and Photoshop adjustments to correct for these.

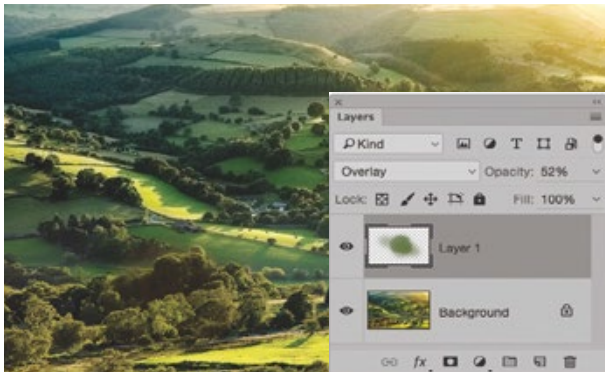
1 Apply Basic panel adjustments

The first step was to open the raw image in Camera Raw. I selected the Basic panel and clicked on the Auto button to apply the settings shown here. This lightened the Exposure, added more Contrast and fine tuned the Whites and Blacks adjustments to add extra tone contrast.



2 Add a Graduated Filter adjustment

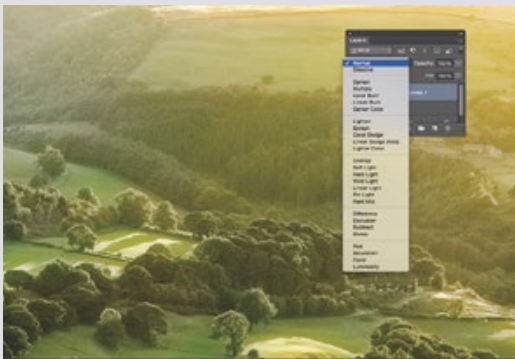
To remove the atmospheric haze, I chose to apply a localised Graduated Filter adjustment to the top half of the photo. Here, I set the Dehaze slider to +80. As a consequence of setting this, I also needed to lighten the Shadows in order to preserve more detail in the darker areas.



3 Remove the lens flare artefacts

The Dehaze adjustment ended up emphasising the lens flare. To address this, I opened the image in Photoshop, where I added a new empty layer set to Overlay mode at 52% opacity. I then sampled a local green colour using the eyedropper tool, and then painted over the flared areas using the Brush tool.

Blend mode colouring



THERE are 27 blend modes in Photoshop. You can either select a blend mode from the Layers panel Layer blend menu (as I did here), or, if using one of the Photoshop painting or fill tools, you can select a layer blend mode from the Tools Option bar. Whenever I wish to colourise portions of an image, I generally select the Color blend mode, sample a target colour from the photograph and

paint. This allows me to replace the hue and saturation values with the new colour I am painting with. In the above example, I selected the Overlay blend mode because I knew this would do almost the same thing as the Color blend mode. However, this particular blend mode would also allow me to paint in more contrast, which was necessary to counteract the lens flare.

Martin Evening is a noted expert in both photography and digital imaging. He is well known in London for his fashion and beauty work, for which he has won several awards. Martin has worked with the Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom engineering teams over many years and is one of the founding members of a software design company. Visit www.martinevening.com

Accessories

Useful gadgets to enhance your photography, from phones to filters...

Lastolite Circular Bottletop Reflector 120cm kit

£79 • www.lastolite.com

Callum McInerney-Riley tries out a multi-purpose reflector that's perfect for portraits

At a glance

- Lastolite 5-in-1 120cm diffuser with sunfire, silver, gold and white bottletops

FOR portrait, studio and still-life photographers, a reflector is a must-have piece of kit, whether you're shooting inside or out. I take a reflector to most of my shoots, and the Lastolite Circular Bottletop Reflector 120cm kit is about as useful as they come.

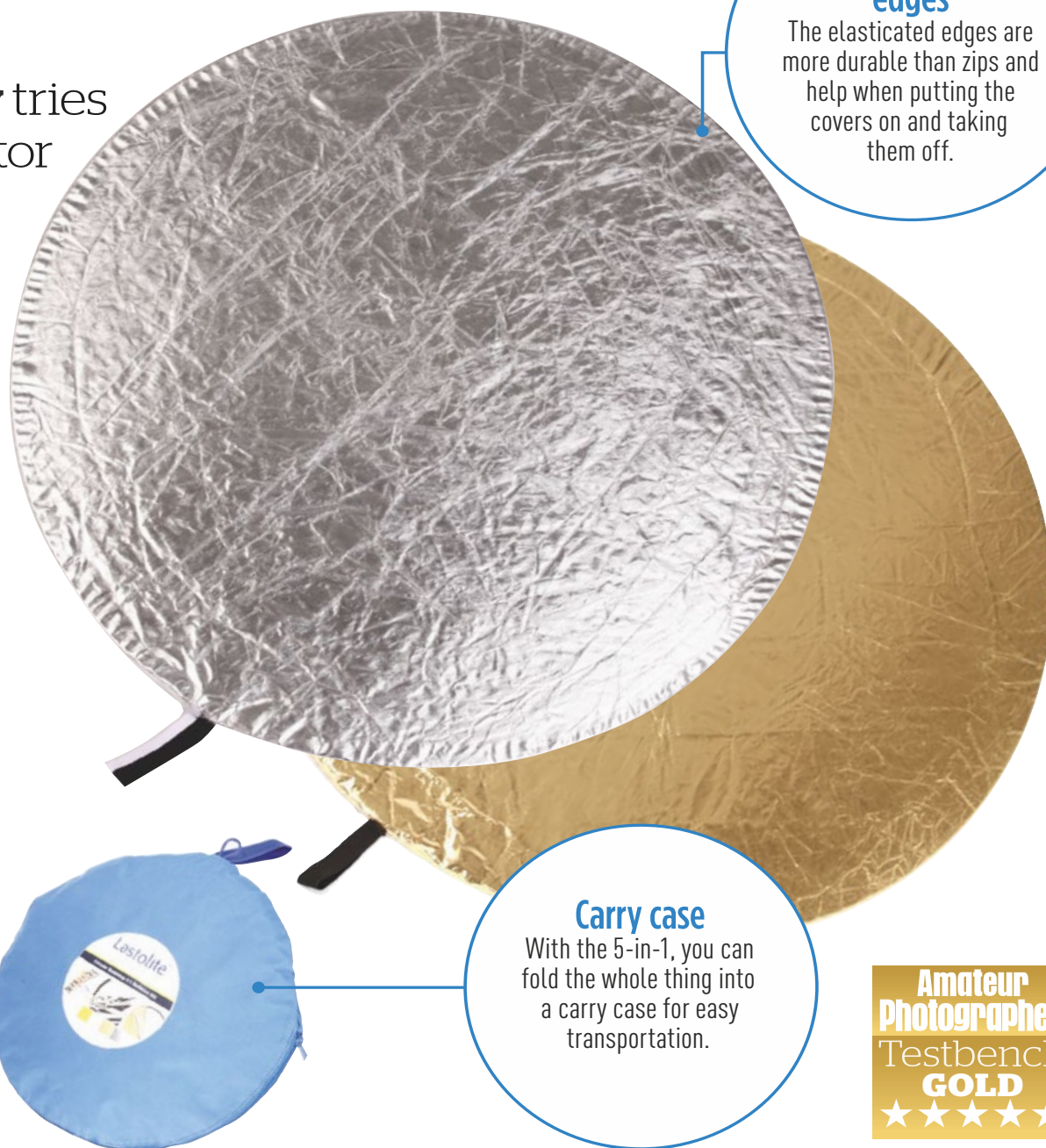
It comes with two reversible covers and the main body of the reflector is translucent. The idea of the translucent part is that it lets a lot of light through, giving photographers the ability to diffuse harsh sunlight. The covers boast four different coatings to allow photographers to manipulate the light in different ways.

First, the white side is perfect for reflecting direct light back at your subject to fill and soften shadows. The silver side achieves much the same, but it reflects more light than the white and casts a colder light. Gold reflects roughly the same amount of light as the silver, but the effect is a much warmer, vibrant light. Sometimes, this gold side can be overpowering and rather obvious. Thankfully, on the opposite side of the silver is a sunfire colour that is a mix of both silver and gold. This results in reflected light that is slightly warmer than the colour temperature you would expect from sunlight.

Verdict

Overall, the Lastolite Circular Bottletop Reflector 120cm kit packs up really well and is big enough to reflect a good amount of light on everything up to a full-length portrait. The elasticated sides keep the fabric nice and taut, and provide a pleasing quality of light. All five sides of this reflector have their uses, but Sunfire is the one I use most.

There are also 50cm (£35), 75cm (£45) and 95cm (£65) versions available.



Elasticated edges

The elasticated edges are more durable than zips and help when putting the covers on and taking them off.

Carry case

With the 5-in-1, you can fold the whole thing into a carry case for easy transportation.

Amateur Photographer
Testbench
GOLD
★★★★★

ALSO CONSIDER

Phottix 5-in-1 Premium Triangle Reflector 80cm

£32, www.phottix.com

Due to the shape, the Phottix 5-in-1 Premium Triangle Reflector 80cm is ideal for portraits, especially for lightening under the chin when taking a headshot. It has two handles, making it easy to hold in position.



Interfit 5-in-1 Reflector 56cm

£24.99, www.interfitphotographic.com

Although smaller than the Lastolite reflector, the Interfit 5-in-1 does boast black, white, silver, gold and shoot-through translucent. Covers attach via zips and it comes with a carry case.



Sunbounce Pro Silver/White

£310.99, www.sunbounce.com/en/home.html

At the top end of reflectors is the California Sunbounce. The large reflectors are designed primarily for professional photographers, built to the highest standard possible and commonly used for high-end portrait shooting.



Vanguard Sedona 41

£89.99 • www.vanguardworld.co.uk



A compartment at the bottom houses your camera kit, with space above for everything else

WHILE there's no doubting the usefulness of the traditional camera shoulder bag, sometimes it's just not the right tool for the job. If you're out walking or hiking all day, for example, then you'll need space for extras such as waterproofs and food, as well as for your camera gear. You'll also want a bag that can be carried around comfortably for extended periods even when fully laden, which may well mean a backpack.

Vanguard's Sedona range of casually styled backpacks aims to cover these requirements. We're looking at the smallest of three rucksacks here, with a capacity of 41 litres. Larger 45L and 51L variants are also available, as well as 34L and 43L sling bags. Each of the five designs comes in a choice of three colours: blue, black and khaki.

The basic idea is that you have a padded camera compartment at the base of the bag, accessed via a zipped flap at the back, with a good amount of space for other items above. This rear-entry system gives excellent security for your equipment, the disadvantage being that it's not especially quick to get at in a hurry. The bag will accommodate a decent amount of kit; for example, an enthusiast DSLR and three lenses should fit without any trouble. The outside of the bag is festooned with pockets and attachment points, so you can carry a tripod or walking poles without any difficulty.

The Sedona 41 is a well-made bag, and its styling is unlikely to draw any unwanted attention. It's reasonably lightweight, at just 910g, but with a well-designed harness including an integrated waist belt, it's comfortable to carry even with a heavy load on board. It may not be the best choice when quick access to your kit is necessary, but that's about the only criticism.

Andy Westlake



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At a glance

- 24.2-million-pixel, APS-C CMOS sensor
- ISO 100-51,200
- 425 phase-detection AF
- 4K video capture
- Up to 11fps continuous shooting
- £1,000 (body only)

Sony Alpha 6300

With 425 phase-detection AF points, 11fps burst shooting with autofocus and 24.2MP sensor, the **Sony Alpha 6300** aims to tackle DSLRs head on. **Richard Sibley** tries it out

For and against

- + Continuous focusing is comparable with a DSLR
- + Great video features, including 4K capture
- + Sturdy mount and body, plus weather-sealing
- + USB power supply
- Fine detail in JPEG images could be better
- A front control dial would be useful
- No touchscreen
- Awkward to select AF point, especially when using EVF

Where in the range



Sony Alpha 7

Price £799 (body only)

Sony's full-frame E-mount camera has a 24.3-million-pixel sensor, with phase-detection AF and 5-axis stabilisation



Sony Alpha 5100

Price £315 (body only)

Sitting below the Alpha 6300 is the Alpha 5100 with a similar 24.3-million-pixel APS-C sensor, 179 phase-detection points and full HD video

Data file

Sensor	24.2MP, APS-C Exmor CMOS
Output size	6,000x4,000 pixels
Focal length mag	1.5x
Lens mount	Sony E mount
External mic	Yes, 3.5mm stereo mini
Shutter speeds	30-1/4000sec
ISO	100-25,600 (51,200 extended)
Exposure modes	PASM
Metering system	1200-zone metering
Exposure comp	±5EV in 1/3 steps
Drive mode	11fps, 8fps, 6fps or 3fps
Video	4K 25p, full HD (120p/100p/60p/50p/30p/25p/24p up to 14min)
Viewfinder	2.4 million dots
Display	3in, 921,000-dot LCD
Focusing	425 phase-detection and 169 contrast-detection AF points
Memory card	SD, SDHC, SDXC
Power	NP-FW50 Li-ion battery
Dimensions	120x66.9x48.8mm
Weight	495g (with battery and card)



Replacing the Sony Alpha 6000 was never going to be easy. Released in February 2014, the Alpha 6000 became one of Sony's best-selling cameras, admired by reviewers and photographers alike. But time, and technology it seems, waits for no man, and a few of the features of the Alpha 6000 are now starting to look a little dated, which is where the Alpha 6300 comes in.

The new Sony Alpha 6300 sits at the top of Sony's APS-C-sensor E-mount line-up. As you would expect, it inherits a number of features from the RX series, as well as the full-frame Alpha 7 series E-mount cameras. Yet the Alpha 6300 isn't just a rehash of features we have already seen elsewhere in the line-up. Sony has set out to answer the critics of compact system cameras, taking on the

The key new feature of the Sony Alpha 6300 is its ability to continuously autofocus at up to 11 fps



two key areas of focusing speed and the electronic viewfinder. In addition, by adding weather-sealing, a magnesium-alloy body and 4K video capture, Sony may have created the best APS-C compact system camera yet.

Features

Before we delve into the exciting new features, let's get the key points out of the way. The Alpha 6300 uses a 24.2-million-pixel-resolution Sony Exmor APS-C-sized CMOS sensor. While this resolution may not be anything new and exciting, the fact that the sensor now has the world's highest number of phase-detection AF points is. The sensor has also been improved through the use of copper wiring, which can be laid thinner than conventional wiring. This allows for more light to reach the sensor and a larger photodiode

to capture the light. The result is that Sony claims the camera has an improved signal-to-noise ratio over the sensor of its predecessor, and as such the camera has a sensitivity range of ISO 100-25,600, which is expandable to ISO 51,200. This is 1 stop more than its predecessor.

Some people may have expected the Alpha 6300 to have a backside illuminated (BSI) sensor, especially given that Sony has a 42-million-pixel BSI full-frame sensor in the Alpha 7R II. However, it is perhaps asking a little too much for the Alpha 6300 to have a newly developed phase-detection AF system and BSI.

On the rear of the camera is a fairly standard wideangle, 3in, 921,000-dot screen, but it's in the electronic viewfinder where Sony has worked its magic. The OLED viewfinder has a 2.4-million-pixel resolution, which is higher than the

1.44-million-dot EVF in the Alpha 6000, but it should be noted that it is the same as that in the much older NEX-6. Sony has, in effect, reintroduced this resolution, so it is difficult to see it as a brand-new addition. However, the 2.4-million-dot EVF is still on par, or better than most of the camera's competition. What is impressive is the 120fps display refresh rate of the EVF. This high-speed rate provides a view with no discernible lag and a very realistic electronic view of the scene.

Next up on the list of new features is the continuous shooting rate. The Alpha 6300 shoots at an impressive 11fps, while metering and autofocusing. This is great, but there is also a secondary high-speed continuous shooting mode that shoots at a reduced rate of 8fps while metering and autofocusing. 'Why the lower shooting rate?' Well, when shooting

at this reduced rate, the viewfinder has minimal shutter blackout and presents a live view between shots. Previously, this was a problem with compact system cameras. Early CSCs simply show a completely black screen between shots. On more recent cameras a quick flash of the last image taken is shown between shots. Some do show a live view image, but only with a reduced burst rate of 4-6fps. All of this can make it difficult to frame a moving subject. The 120fps refresh rate of the Alpha 6300, and fast readout of the sensor, mean that the Alpha 6300 can truly keep up when shooting at 8fps.

Sony has gone back to the drawing board somewhat for the AF system of the Alpha 6300, and the new 425 phase-detection points cover virtually the whole frame. For those





➤ harder-to-reach corners, there is a further 169 contrast-detection AF, resulting in a comprehensive edge-to-edge focus point array.

As you would expect from a Sony camera, there is a huge number of

additional features built into the camera, and short of writing a guidebook on them, there simply isn't enough space or time to go into them all here. There is in-camera panoramic shooting, HDR bracketing, NFC and Wi-Fi,

and the ability to add additional features to the camera via Sony's PlayMemories mobile applications. There are quite a few applications available, including timelapse and star-trails apps, as well as the Sky HDR app, which takes an exposure

of both the sky and the land and blends them for a gradient-filter-like effect. Sony regularly comes up with new apps for its cameras, so it is worth checking to see what the latest ones can do.

Build and handling

While there have been a few tweaks compared with its predecessor, the majority of the Alpha 6300 is similar, and indeed if you have used any of the Sony Alpha or RX compact cameras, then the button and dial placements will seem familiar to you.

The important things to note are that the Alpha 6300 has a tough magnesium-alloy body, which includes internal frames as well as the top rear and front cover constructed of magnesium alloy. This makes the Alpha 6300 stronger and tougher than the preceding cameras in the line-up, while still keeping it lightweight. Also new is that the camera has dust and moisture resistance with a number of seals surrounding the buttons, dials and other entrances to the camera to prevent dust and moisture ingress.



Continuous autofocus

WITH image quality from compact system cameras just as good as the quality from a DSLR, manufacturers are now trying to tackle the areas that are typically weaker, particularly continuous autofocus.

With better algorithms and more processing power, this issue is slowly being addressed, and the Alpha 6300 may just be the tipping point where we can say that the £1,000 camera can continuously autofocus as well as an equivalently priced DSLR.

There are two high-speed continuous AF modes, and the camera is able to focus and meter from frame to frame in both. The difference is what happens between shots.

The 11fps mode is faster, but doesn't show a real-time preview between shots, whereas the 8fps mode does. The result is that the 8fps mode allows you to frame your subjects just as well as a DSLR does.

Using the continuous AF tracking mode, the Alpha 6300 utilises a range of phase-detection points across the whole frame. However, it uses a higher concentration of points over the subject, so the camera uses the wide array to detect big jumps in motion, and the more defined range for the more precise jumps. You can see the continuous AF in action quite clearly when you are using the camera, with the AF points changing position and jumping around as

the subject moves. Although it doesn't always seem very precise on the live view display, the resulting images are accurately focused.

We tested the AF with a mountain biker, going downhill at a speed of 15-20mph, and found we were able to fire off a burst of shots in raw and JPEG mode, and nearly every one was sharply focused. The camera did lock on to the subject's coat, but knocking the aperture down to f/5.6 made a difference with the increased depth of field helping to improve the sharpness on the subject's face.

Overall, the continuous AF is impressive and can rival, and better, DSLRs in the same price bracket. However, as with all continuous autofocusing, the key is to make sure you familiarise yourself with how the system works in different situations to get the best results.

Video

A FEW years ago, Panasonic was racing away with the market for those who wanted to shoot stills and video, but Sony's Alpha 7 series has changed all that. Sony now seems to be standardising a number of features across its camera range. So it is no surprise to see that not only does the Alpha 6300 record 4K video, but it also has a huge range of other features,

Presumably with Sony's new range of G master lenses, and the fact that the Alpha 6300 will be used for video, the lens mount of the camera has also been made stronger and more robust. This should cope with the weight demands of telephoto and large-aperture lenses, particularly those that may be used for capturing video footage, and for sports and wildlife photographers.

Another interesting tweak of the camera design, which will benefit video shooters, is the fact that the camera can be powered, and not just charged, via USB, provided there is a battery installed. So pack a USB battery pack in your bag and you should be able to keep shooting video and timelapse footage for longer, or just to keep your camera's battery topped up.

Besides this, the body of the Alpha 6300 remains largely the same. The grip and the shutter button have been enhanced and now feel quite similar to Sony's Alpha 7 range of CSCs. Sony has also come a long way since its first NEX compact system cameras, and there are a huge number of different settings that can be assigned to the custom buttons on the rear of the camera. Although the Alpha 6300 has only one rear dial, and not the additional front dial that exists on the Alpha 7 cameras, you can still get the Alpha 6300 to operate in a similar manner.

Sony tends to receive a lot of criticism for its menu system, which is very comprehensive but some find it difficult to navigate. However, I have no such problem with the camera, and although it is very much a personal experience, I can't say any of the settings were difficult to find.

In use, the Alpha 6300 is a fairly solid, reliable camera. It may lack the design appeal of

such as picture profiles that allow you to shoot with an S-Log2 or 3 contrast curve, zebra patterning, smooth AF during video, as well as a 100fps full HD footage option for converting video to 4x slow motion. An external microphone socket also features on the side, although sadly there is no headphone socket for audio monitoring. There really is too much to talk about when it comes to video, so you can read a full video review at www.thevideomode.com.

something like the Fujifilm X-T1 or the Olympus OM-D series, but it is fairly easy to use, feels comfortable in the hand, and doesn't weigh a great deal. A useful addition to the body of the Alpha 6300 would be an exposure-compensation dial on the camera's top-plate, much like in the Alpha 7 series. It really isn't difficult to change the exposure compensation, but having tested a number of the Sony Alpha 7 cameras over the past couple of years, the exposure-compensation dial would be a nice touch, especially for those who may wish to use the Alpha 6300 alongside an Alpha 7 camera. Those wishing to jump up from one of the RX cameras will find that the Alpha 6300 operates in a similar way to Sony's Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 and RX10 cameras.

Performance

Being small and lightweight, I found that the Alpha 6300 travelled with me in my bag for most of my two weeks of testing the camera. With the program dial on the top of the camera, it was easy to switch between shutter, aperture and manual priority, and I also used one of the custom items for my preferred shooting settings. This made it very fast to switch between my video and still-image settings, without having to tweak menu items.

Having the combination of stills and video worked well, and the detail in the 4K video mode is excellent. It is a shame Sony hasn't incorporated a 4K photo-extraction mode as Panasonic has. Being able to pull 8-million-pixel still images quickly from video files would be useful.

That said, the autofocus of the Alpha 6300, along with the 11fps burst mode, is good enough that you will usually be able to

Focal points

Some significant tweaks make the Sony Alpha 6300 much better than its predecessor

USB power

So long as there is a battery fitted, the Alpha 6300 can also be powered via USB.

Flash

The built-in flash has a guide number of 6m @ ISO 100. The Alpha 6300 is also compatible with Sony's range of wireless flashguns.

Battery

As usual for its E-mount cameras, Sony has used the NP-FW50 battery in the Alpha 6300. This is good for 350 shots with the EVF, 400 shots with the rear screen or approx 75mins of video using the LCD screen.



Micro HDMI

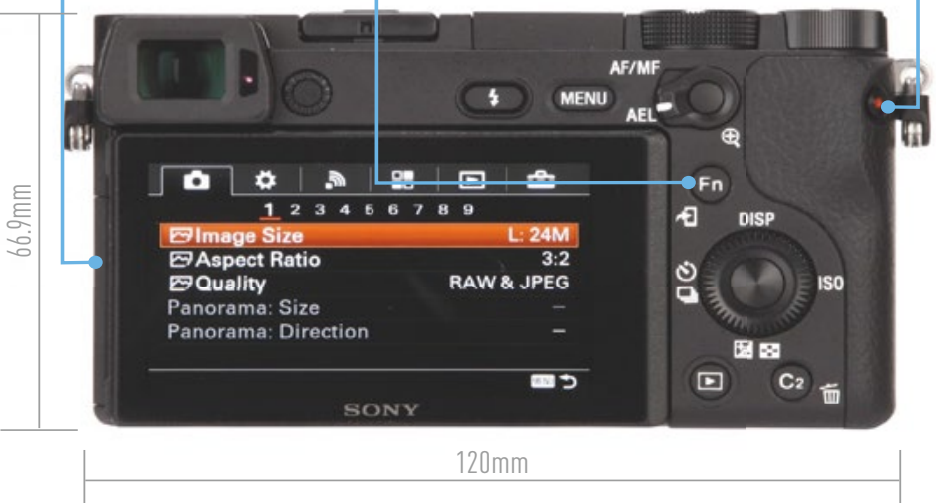
The Alpha 6300 has a Micro HDMI socket for video output. It can capture 8-bit 4:2:2 video via this socket.

Quick Wi-Fi access

When in playback mode, pressing the Fn button allows you to quickly send an image to your phone over Wi-Fi.

Video recording

Like most other cameras, the Alpha 6300 is limited to 29mins 59secs recording time.





The Alpha 6300 can produce great colours in-camera

➤ capture the exact moment you want, with a good-quality JPEG or raw file, that would be better than a compressed 8-million-pixel video frame. You can read more about the experience of using continuous shooting and autofocus on page 46, but in summary, the Alpha 6300 and its 0.05sec AF speed is certainly up to the task.

The 1,200-segment evaluative metering system allowed me to pull the camera out and point and shoot when an opportunity arose. Generally, the exposures produced by the metering system were accurate, and especially when shooting landscapes it boosted the exposure to the point of highlighting clipping, producing nice detail in shadow areas. Occasionally, I did dial the exposure down slightly to produce darker, more brooding photos when shooting in overcast conditions.

For those who like shooting JPEG images and getting everything right in-camera, the Alpha 6300 has the standard Sony range of dynamic range optimisation (DRO) settings, with five different levels, as well as an auto feature. These adjust the contrast across the image by boosting the shadow detail and pulling back highlights. Used at the weaker settings, the results look natural, but cranked up to level five you can get an almost HDR effect.

There is, in fact, a lot you can do in-camera to alter the look of JPEG images to your own taste. As usual, there are numerous preset colour styles that can be applied and tweaked, and let's not forget there are the PlayMemories camera apps, such as Sky HDR. Better still are the picture profile settings that are actually designed for video capture, but can also be used for

still images. There is a huge amount of advanced image detail that you can adjust within these settings, including the black and white points, as well as the contrast curve, saturation and the particular strength of each of the RGB colour channels. If you can get your head around what each setting does, then you can create your very own picture style that can be applied to your JPEG images. And for raw shooters, there is the option of 14-bit uncompressed raw files to eke out every last bit of detail.

Overall, my experience of using the Alpha 6300 was a good one. I didn't come across any major issues, and the camera lived up to my expectations. I was able to transfer images via Wi-Fi quickly and post images from the Alpha 6300 to AP's Twitter account while testing the camera. The autofocus is about the best I have used in a compact system camera, and few cameras can match the 11fps shooting rate. The 4K video capture along with 100/120fps slow-motion shooting rates are added bonuses to a comprehensive list of camera features. There really is a lot to like about the Alpha 6300.

However, there are still a few niggles with the Alpha 6300. First, it remains time consuming to change the AF point. Come on, Sony! We have been asking for a touchscreen for this for around three years now – it would make life a lot easier. Currently, I find that using the AF tracking to centre focus and recompose is the best way to focus quickly.

Second, I would like to see a front control on the Alpha 6300. This isn't a huge deal, but an additional control dial is always a good thing, and it would really place the camera just below the Alpha 7 range.

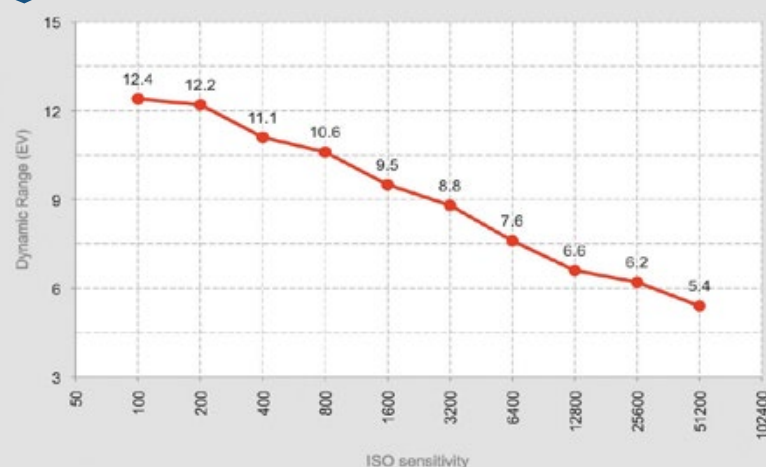


Lab results

Andrew Sydenham's lab tests reveal just how the camera performs

WHILE the Sony Alpha 6300 has a 24.2-million-pixel APS-C sensor that is largely the same as that in the Alpha 6000, what most Alpha 6300 users should consider is the lenses they are using with the camera. We tested the Alpha 6300 with the Sony 16-50mm f/3.5-5.6 Power Zoom, the Zeiss 16-70mm f/4 and the new Sigma 30mm f/1.4 lenses. The difference in quality when using the latter two lenses produces far sharper images. Sony could do with a few more premium lenses in its APS-C E-mount line-up. Raw images have a good level of detail, and when editing them using the latest version of Adobe Camera Raw, I found that colour, sharpness and noise levels can all be easily controlled. However, Sony tends to be a bit heavy handed with its JPEG compression and noise reduction, and fine textures can look a little soft. However, it isn't an issue unless you are pixel-peeping.

Dynamic range



With a maximum dynamic range of 12.4EV at ISO 100, the dynamic range of the Alpha 6300 is good. There is a gradual decline in the dynamic range as the sensitivity increases, and it is still a respectable 10.6EV at ISO 800. After ISO 3,200 the drop is quite severe, with it dropping from 8.8EV down to 7.6EV at ISO 6,400, dropping further still at the maximum sensitivities. To get the best out of the available dynamic range, I found it best to overexpose slightly, then darken the shadow and highlight areas when editing.

Resolution



The Alpha 6300 performed well in our line test chart. It reaches almost 3,200lp/ph at ISO 100, although there are some signs of moiré patterning. The Alpha 6300 holds on to a high level of detail at 3,000lp/ph until it reaches ISO 800, where there is the first really noticeable drop-off after this point. As with the noise, it is beyond the ISO 6,400 point that the resolution really begins to drop, and although the Alpha 6300 still reaches around 2,700lp/ph at ISO 12,800 it is badly affected by noise and loss of detail.



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Noise

Both raw and JPEG images taken from our diorama scene are captured at the full range of ISO settings. The camera is placed in its default setting for JPEG images. Raw images are sharpened and noise reduction applied, to strike the best balance between resolution and noise.



JPEG ISO 100



JPEG ISO 400



JPEG ISO 1,600



JPEG ISO 6,400



JPEG ISO 25,600



JPEG ISO 51,200



Although the copper wiring on the sensor of the Alpha 6300 is said to improve the image quality compared to that in the Alpha 6000, we found that the differences were quite subtle. That said, at low sensitivities there does appear to be less noise in shadow areas when you manipulate raw images. The extended highest sensitivity of ISO 51,200 (up from 25,600 in the Alpha 6000) suffers heavily from noise and is best avoided. It really isn't a useful increase, and although it looks better on the specification, leaving the maximum sensitivity at 25,600 would have been sufficient given the level of noise. As usual, I would suggest avoiding the highest two settings, with ISO 12,800 being as high as you really want to push the sensor, and ideally ISO 6,400 should be the highest you want to go unless it's in extremely dark situations.

The competition



Fujifilm X-T1

Sensor: 16.3 million pixels

ISO: 100-51,200 (extended)

Price: £800 (body only)

Fujifilm's 16.3-million-pixel X-T1 looks great and handles superbly. It is the closest we have come to using a manual DSLR. It produces fantastic images, with great colour, but lacks the image resolution, shooting rate and speedy AF of the Alpha 6300.

Olympus OM-D E-M1

Sensor: 16.3 million pixels

ISO: 200-25,600 (extended)

Price: £850 (body only)

Olympus' Micro Four Thirds system OM-D E-M1 camera has fast autofocus and an excellent 5-axis image-stabilisation system. However, it has a lower 16.3-million-pixel resolution and lacks the advanced video features of the Alpha 6300.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX8

Sensor: 20.3 million pixels

ISO: 100-25,600 (extended)

Price: £650 (body only)

Like the E-M1, the GX8 also uses an MFT-sized sensor, but with a higher 20.3MP resolution. While the AF may not be as fast as the Alpha 6300's, it does have impressive 4K video capture, and is excellent value for money at around £650.

Our verdict

WITH the Sony Alpha 6000 being one of the company's most popular cameras of recent years, the Alpha 6300 has a lot to live up to. Thankfully, it more than lives up to its predecessor and takes Sony's next-generation APS-S-sensor E-mount cameras to the next level.

The physical size and shape of the body remain largely the same, although we would have liked a front control dial, and we are starting to sound like a broken record asking for a touchscreen in the premium Sony E-mount cameras. This would make it so much easier to focus and be fantastic for focus-pulling when shooting video, particularly with the advantage of the 425 phase-detection AF points.

But there are some significant improvements to the body, notably the weather-sealing, and the strengthened lens mount. The Alpha 6300 is straightforward to use, and anyone who has used a Sony camera in the past few years will feel right at home.

For videographers, the only thing that is really lacking is a headphone socket for audio monitoring. Other than that, it is a great compact 4K video camera and a perfect accompaniment to an Alpha 7.

Image quality is good, but it is the other areas of the camera that steal the show this time.

The Alpha 6300 is really all about the combination of AF, viewfinder and continuous shooting rate. At the price, no DSLR can shoot as fast as 11fps, and certainly not keep up with focusing.

If you already own an Alpha 6000, should you upgrade? In terms of image quality there doesn't seem to be too much difference, so it really comes down to whether or not you will appreciate the new features of the camera. Certainly, the magnesium-alloy body is a good upgrade, but whether or not the AF system and 4K video are will depend on the type of photography, or videography, that you do.



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Western Digital My Cloud EX2 Ultra

Andy Westlake tests a back-up drive that's ideal for photographers

At a glance

- Network Attached Storage (NAS) drive
- Twin mirrored hard drives (RAID 1)
- Supports multiple users
- Gives remote access to files via My Cloud
- Available disk-free or in 4TB, 8TB, 12TB and 16TB capacities
- £245-£803 depending on capacity (£135 disk-free)
- www.wd.com/en

Dual USB 3.0

This allows external drives to be attached for additional storage or back-up.

Swappable drives

Opening the top gives easy access to the hard disks if they need to be replaced.

LAN socket

This connects directly to your router using an ethernet cable.

Status lights

Front-plate LEDs indicate operational status and disk health.

If you're anything like me and have been using digital cameras almost since they first appeared, chances are you'll have a large number of precious image files dating back many years. Storing them all safely can be a headache; at the very least you should save everything to two different hard drives in case one fails, and ideally have another

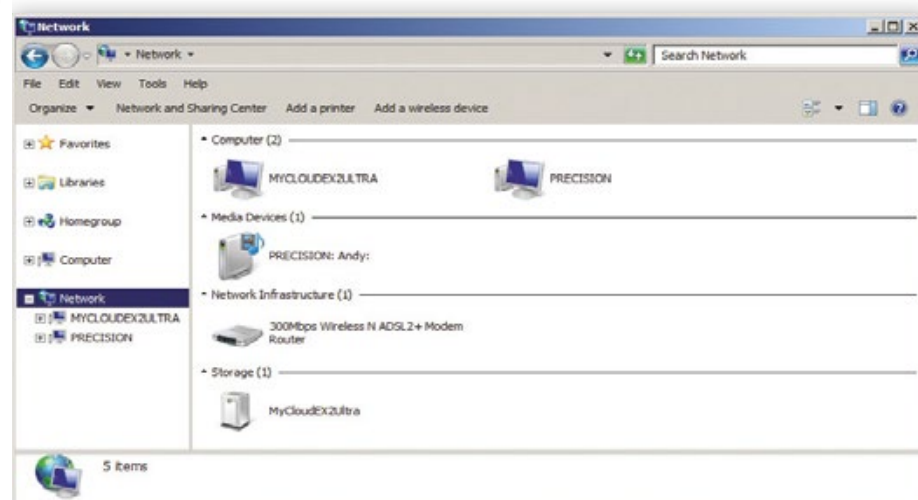
back-up held at a different location. Needless to say, managing all this can be pretty hard work. Even then, you might find that your photos are rarely seen again, simply because they're on hard disks that can only be accessed from your own computer.

Western Digital's My Cloud EX2 Ultra is designed to solve many of these problems. It's





The twin hard drives are accessed from the top of the unit, and are easy to replace if one of them fails



The drive is accessible as shared storage on your home or office network

➤ a network-attached storage device that plugs directly into your router, meaning that it's connected not just to every device in your home network, either hard-wired or over Wi-Fi, but to the internet as a whole. This allows you to access your files remotely via the WD My Cloud app or web interface, wherever you happen to be. You can also share your files and invite friends and family to see your photos.

Features

The My Cloud EX2 Ultra stores your files on two hard drives in a RAID1 back-up configuration, so you have a second copy if one disk fails. You can buy it either pre-configured with optimised NAS disks in capacities from 4TB through to a whopping 16TB, or disk-free to fit your own. Twin USB 3.0 ports at the back allow you to plug-in external drives and make

further back-ups automatically.

Multi-user support is built in. You can create password-protected accounts for friends or co-workers, and arrange them into groups so family or team members can quickly and easily be given the same access.

You can then configure multiple shares on the disk, giving specific users or groups access to each, so each user only gets access to the files you allow.

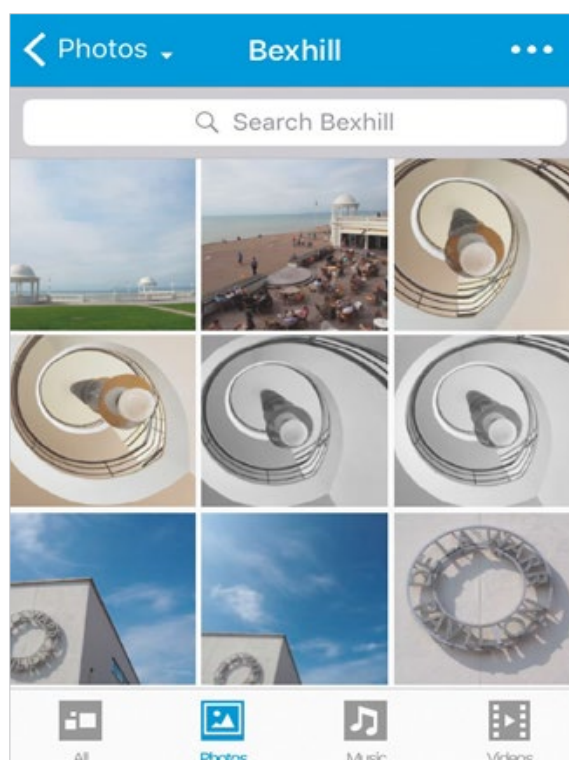
There are lots of other useful features, too. It's possible to configure automatic back-ups to USB hard drives or selected external cloud services. Alternatively, you can enable automatic back-up of your camera's memory card when you plug it into the USB ports, or keep all the contents of your mobile devices backed up via the WD My Cloud app. You can even use the drive as a music or media server.

My Cloud & Photos apps

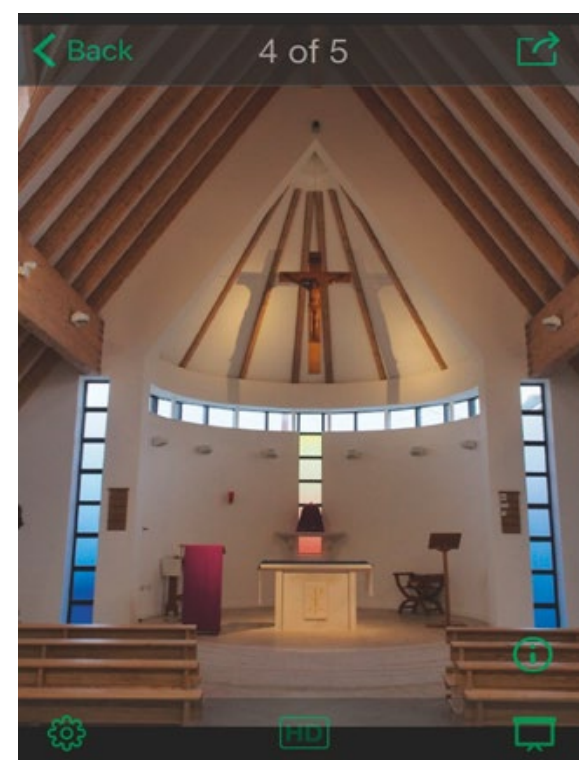
THE MY Cloud EX2 Ultra works with Western Digital's My Cloud mobile app, which lets you access all of your files while on the move. It's possible to browse by type (either all files, photos, music, or videos), then download those you want.

One particularly neat feature for photographers is Western Digital's Photos app for iOS and Android, which is optimised for showing photos. This allows you to browse through the drive and display slideshows of your images on your phone or tablet, with a clean, attractive interface and black background.

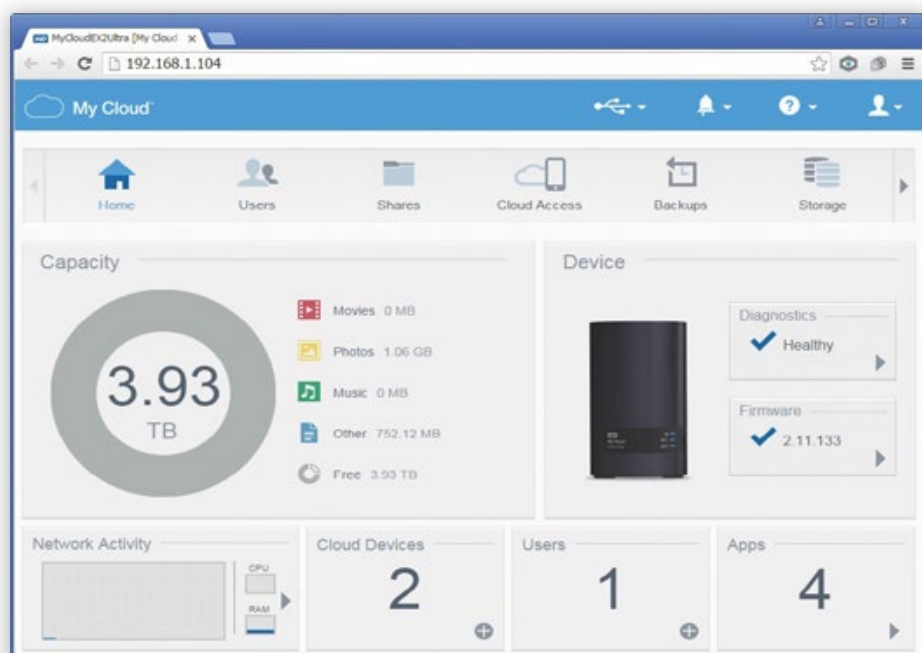
Small thumbnails are loaded first, but you can download full-sized images if you want. This means that you can show any of your stored photos to friends, family or clients wherever you have a network connection, without having to upload them to a photo-sharing site or cloud storage service.



WD's My Cloud app lets you browse your files



The WD Photos app is used for viewing images



Advanced settings are controlled from the management console

Set-up

Initial installation is straightforward, but beyond that you're slightly left to your own devices. There's no manual in the box, just a card prompting you to plug the drive in and switch it on, then pointing you to Western Digital's online set-up.

This takes you through the process of creating a My Cloud account, after which it detects the device on your network and associates the two. It then opens the web interface for the drive, which makes it easy to generate additional user accounts, and start uploading and sharing your files.

While this gives you access to the core features, you'll get the most out of the device if you're prepared to delve into the main management console and configure all the settings. The lack of clear documentation means that this isn't as easy as it should be: initially you need your My Cloud username but no password to get access, but this isn't really explained adequately, and I spent a couple of frustrating hours working it out. The electronic manual on Western Digital's website isn't much help; it's a 122-page PDF file with no internal hyperlinking between sections, which makes navigation a pain. Some things are made to sound far more complex than they really are, and it's positively misleading about others (it insists your username should be 'admin').

The management console itself is complex with a huge number of options, but most of it is reasonably straightforward if you're technically inclined. It allows you to set a whole array of further options, including creating shares and user groups, configuring cloud

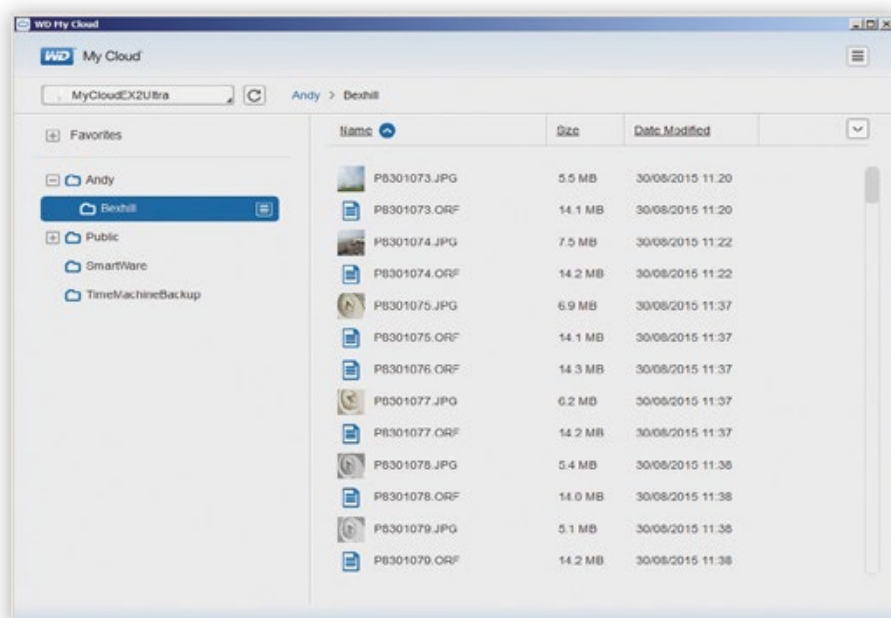
access for mobile devices, as well as setting automatic on/off schedules to save power and prolong the life of your hard disks.

In use

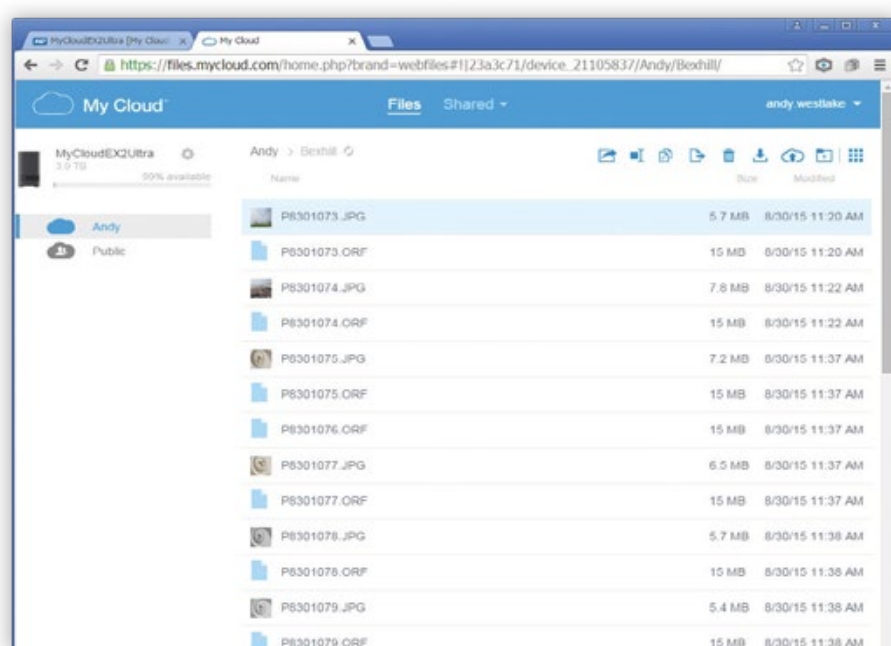
With a 15x10cm footprint (6x4in) the My Cloud EX2 Ultra takes up little space on your desk, and it's pretty quiet in operation. Build quality seems absolutely fine for home use, with a plastic exterior around a metal inner casing that holds the disks in place. Accessing your files is easy; the device shows up as a shared drive to computers on your home network, but you can also use the free WD My Cloud app available for Mac, Windows, iOS and Android. This is straightforward and easy to use, with an admirably consistent interface on computers and mobile devices. Even if you're working with a locked-down machine onto which you can't install software, the web interface gives you easy access to your files.

File-transfer speeds across a home network leave nothing to be desired, thanks to the gigabit ethernet connection. However, unlike true cloud services, remote file access is limited by the upload speed of the network it's connected to, which means it'll probably be rather slow. For instance, I found 15MB raw files took three minutes to transfer using my home broadband connection. This is a consideration if you want to access large files such as raw images.

Sharing lots of files to external users could eat into your broadband data allowance pretty quick too. For this kind of use a cloud service such as Dropbox would make more sense.



The WD My Cloud desktop app makes file management easy



Files can also be accessed remotely online using a web-based interface

Our verdict

I HAVE experimented with various approaches for storing my image files, but ultimately they all seem to end up on a stack of hard drives on my desk. Some find their way onto Flickr and Facebook, and others I share via Dropbox, but the majority are inaccessible when my computer is turned off.

What's great about the Western Digital My Cloud EX2 Ultra is the way it kills so many birds with one stone. The RAID1 configuration gives the security of a duplicate copy of every file, and you can plug in a portable hard drive periodically to produce another back-up.

Organise your favourite photos into albums and in effect you get your own private photo-sharing service. You don't necessarily even have to copy images across yourself, as the WD Sync app can be used to automatically back up specified folders from your computer's local hard drive. Speed issues mean that it's not a replacement for a cloud service or portable drive if you regularly need to access large files when you're away from home, but the great thing is that you can grab any file wherever you are, at any time.

Overall, the device is an excellent storage solution with some particularly useful features for photographers. Some poor documentation left me frustrated during initial set-up, but once I got it up and running I was very impressed indeed, and I can easily see a place for it in my workflow.



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Locating 6x6cm mounts

Q I use a Minolta Autocord twin-lens reflex and a Mamiya RB67 that take 120 film and I am trying to find a supply of 6x6cm transparency mounts – plastic or card glassless. Darlington in Co Durham, my nearest town, has no photographic shops other than Max Spielmann and Boots, both of which have been unable to assist. Can you help?

ME Harris

A It's great to hear you are still shooting 120mm film on your excellent RB67 and Minolta TLR. I've found two suppliers of 6x6cm transparency mounts.

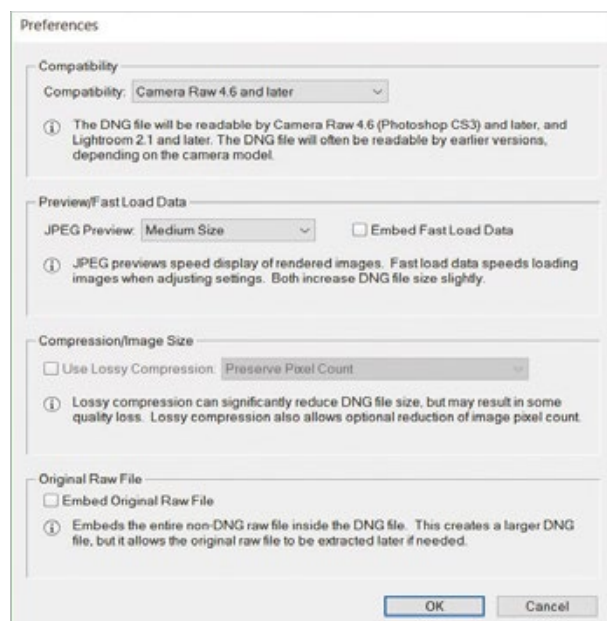
The first is Speed Graphic Ltd, Unit 4 Woodlea Park, Station Approach, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5AZ. Website: www.speedgraphic.co.uk. Telephone number: 01420 560 066. Open Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5.30pm.

Firstcall Photographic Ltd, Cherry Grove Rise, West Monkton, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8LW. Website: www.firstcall-photographic.co.uk Telephone number: 01823 413 007. Open Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm.

I am sure these specialists will help you.
Andrew Sydenham, studio manager

DNG files: why so huge?

Q I recently converted some Panasonic raw files into Adobe DNG (as my Adobe Camera Raw is rather old) and they all ended up about three or four times



Use DNG Converter Preferences to change file size

Close-up woes

Q I've recently become interested in close-up photography, and invested in a proper macro lens (a Sigma 105mm f/2.8) and a decent tripod (a Manfrotto 190). I find the tripod really good and like the horizontal column for shooting downwards, but my problem is the ball head. It just seems impossible to set it up properly as the camera always moves when I try to adjust it and lock the head, which is really frustrating. Can you recommend something better? I don't mind spending up to £150.

Gemma Ulverstone

A I'm afraid this is a common problem with shooting close-ups: small movements of the camera can give large changes in composition, and ball heads are particularly difficult to control with sufficient accuracy. Most photographers find that three-way heads work a bit better, as you can adjust the camera independently in each axis, with Manfrotto's 804RC2 design being well matched to 190-series tripods. The basic version costs as little as £49. It has recently been replaced by a Mark II model with sliding retractable handles, which packs up smaller and costs £79.

For macro, though, geared heads are the best. Rather than releasing a lock, repositioning the camera and then locking it down again, these use rotating knobs to move the camera directly with much more precision. Our current favourite is Manfrotto's XPRO geared three-way head, which is lightweight but sturdy and costs £159. Its predecessor, the MN 410, is a bit cheaper, but with an all-metal construction it's a fair bit heavier, too. **Andy Westlake**



Manfrotto's XPRO geared three-way head offers real precision

bigger than the originals. Is this typical? I made sure the embed original option was off, so that wasn't the problem. **Nigel**

A All the settings that can influence the output file size are in the Preferences screen of the DNG Converter.

Embedding a full-sized JPEG preview, or the original raw file, will result in a larger file. Lossy compression will decrease the file size, but at a possible cost to image quality.

What is less obvious, though, is that the Camera Raw compatibility setting can also have a significant influence on file size for some cameras. This is because modern lens design is based around combining optical and software corrections to give the best overall image quality for any given lens size and price point. In particular, most compacts and mirrorless compact system cameras use software correction of curvilinear distortion.

The correction parameters can be encoded directly into DNG files, and then applied automatically by the raw converter. However, this process was only formalised in June 2009 with the DNG 1.3 standard, supported by Adobe Camera Raw 5.4 and later.

Panasonic was one of the earliest adopters of software lens corrections, so chances are they're needed for your raw files. However, if you're setting the compatibility to ACR 4.6 or earlier, which you'll need for compatibility with Photoshop CS3, the correction settings can't be encoded in the DNG files. So instead, DNG Converter demosaics the raw files and applies the relevant distortion correction, but it then has to save full-colour RGB files, as opposed to the original raws that only record one colour channel per pixel location. The result is files that are at least 3x larger than the original raws, and I suspect this is what you're seeing. **Andy Westlake**

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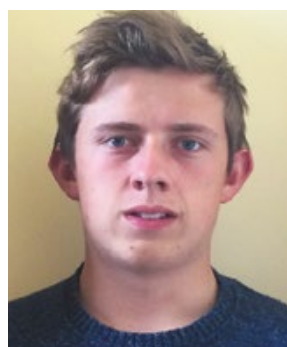
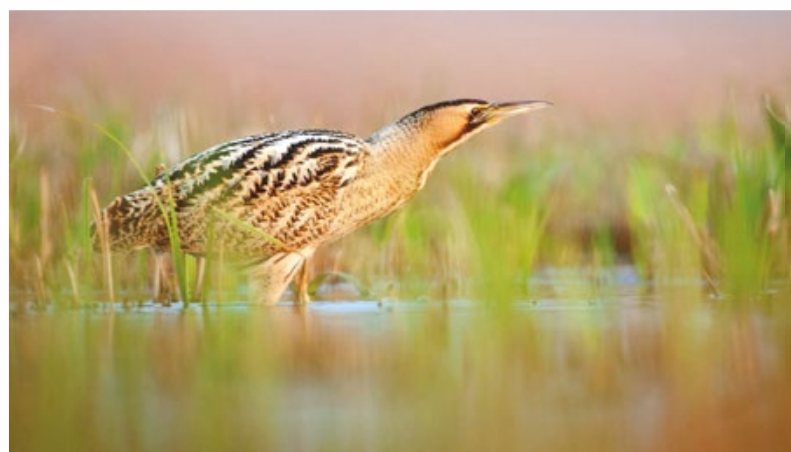
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In the bag

The award-winning wildlife photographer Oscar Dewhurst lets us peek inside his camera bag. www.oscardewhurst.com

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Nikon AF-S Nikkor 400mm f/2.8 E FL ED VR

1 This Nikon has replaced my 600mm lens. I switched for its lightness and flexibility with the addition of converters, so I can isolate subjects at 800mm, and show more habitat at 400mm. The AF and sharpness are superb.

Swarovski EL 8x32

2 When I go out with my camera, I always take my binoculars. It's easier to use binoculars than a lens to find subjects, as they are lighter than a 400mm f/2.8. It is also nice to put down a camera and just watch what is unfolding in front of you.

Nikon TC-20E III teleconverter

3 A benefit of having an f/2.8 lens is that it works well with both the Nikon 1.4x and 2x teleconverters. I find the set-up I have now is far more flexible than when I was using a 600mm, with the occasional 1.4x converter.

Nikon D800

4 This is my first full-frame body and although it doesn't have the fastest frame rate at 4fps, the autofocus and detail it captures are fantastic. You can get it up to 5fps in some situations, too.

Wimberley tripod head

5 Although I can handhold the 400mm f/2.8, being able to leave it on a tripod when waiting for something to happen is much more convenient. The benefit of using this tripod head is the ease of panning you get. Following moving subjects with this is much easier than with a conventional ball head.

PocketWizard Plus IIs

6 I only acquired these transceivers recently and am going to use them for remote wideangle photography over the next few months. So far they've worked really well and I'm looking forward to getting some more use out of them.

List of kit Nikon D800, Nikon AF-S Nikkor 400mm f/2.8 E FL ED VR, Nikon AF-S Nikkor 16-35mm f/4G ED VR, Nikon TC-20E III, Nikon TC-14E III, Nikon SB-700, Nikon SB-28, Tamron 90mm f/2.8 SP Di Macro, Swarovski EL 8x32, Wimberley tripod head, PocketWizard Plus III transceivers



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Hasselblad 500C

Ivor Matanle reacquaints us with a Hasselblad SLR from 1958

LAUNCHED 1958

PRICE WHEN NEW £242 4s 9d (£242.24) AP Annual Camera Guide

GUIDE PRICE TODAY £450-£500

THE 500C differed radically from preceding Hasselblads. Instead of using a focal-plane shutter, each of its interchangeable lenses included its own Synchro Compur shutters that synchronised with electronic flash at all speeds. Along with the Carl Zeiss 80mm f/2.8 Planar, this put the 500C at the top of the professional market.

An auxiliary shutter at the focal plane prevented light from reaching the film when focusing. When the shutter button was pressed, the Synchro Compur (which had been open for focusing) closed, the aperture stopped down, the mirror swung up, the auxiliary shutter opened and, finally, the Synchro Compur opened and closed to make the exposure. When the button was released, the auxiliary shutter closed and winding the camera reset the mirror, shutter and diaphragm for the next shot.

What's good Total predictability – once you've got the hang of its quirky ways.

What's bad The outrageous prices some dealers charge for the lenses.



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FROM **Amateur
Photographer**



Professor Newman on...

The true digital

Nowadays, analogue is used to describe 'old school' silver halide photography, yet up close, it's pure digital

One of the odd things about terminology is the way it sometimes flips around. Over the past dozen years or so, 'digital' photography has become ubiquitous, and the previous type of photography – using silver halide emulsions as the 'sensor' – is called 'analogue' to differentiate between the two. In fact, 'digital' photography is, in some ways, more analogue than silver halide.

Digital photography measures the amount of light (an 'analogue' measurement) in each of an array of regularly shaped pixels. Silver halide photography depends on grains, which are either darkened or not, according to whether photons have hit them.

A grain can only be black (reduced to silver) or transparent, so this is an on-off way of building an image.

Both film and silicon sensors make use of the photoelectric effect, whereby a photon incident on an atom releases one of the electrons (If we still used the old Bohr model, which viewed an atom as a tiny solar system, one can imagine the electron being 'knocked out of its orbit'

by the energy of the photon, and being free to wander away from the atom).

In the case of a silicon sensor, these free atoms are induced to travel to an electrode forming a charge, which is measured by the electronic circuitry in the camera. In the case of silver halide, the electron takes part in a chemical reaction called 'reduction' – any chemical reaction in which electrons are gained.

With silver halide emulsion, the silver halide molecule consists of a silver ion, which is positively charged – meaning it is lacking a negatively charged electron – and a halide ion (fluorine, chlorine, bromine or iodine) which, having an additional electron, is negatively charged. Coupled together, they make a stable molecule of salt.

However, a free electron can bind with the silver ion, making up the deficit and leaving an atom of silver metal. The halide ion is left alone, creating what is called a 'hole'. The tiny concentrations of silver form what is called a 'latent image'; the image is there but invisible – it needs to be 'developed'. Photographic developer is also a reducing agent,

but one that is carefully selected to be weak enough so it only reduces silver halide grains that already have a latent image (silver metal atoms) present. The result of this chemical development is that grains with a latent image become completely converted to opaque silver metal.

After development, unexposed silver halide crystals could still form a latent image if exposed to light, so they are washed away using another chemical called a 'fixer'. This explains why film is truly digital – each grain can be dark or transparent, and the quantity of dark ones dictates the density of the image.

A 'fast film' in general simply had larger grains, so that each speck of the latent image developed resulted in a higher density, due to the larger size of the resulting grain.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

Film is a truly digital medium – each grain can either be dark or transparent but nothing in between



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16-80mm f2.8-4G ED AF-S DX VR.....	£869
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18-200mm f3.5-5.6 G ED AF-S DX VR II.....	£549
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Speedlite 90EX	BG-E11 (5D III, 5Ds/r)	LP-E4N (1D X, 1D C)
Speedlite 270EX II	BG-E13 (6D)	LP-E6N (5D III, 7D II, 6D)
Speedlite 320EX	BG-E14 (70D)	LP-E8 (700D, 600D)
Speedlite 430EX III-RT	BG-E16 (7D Mark II)	LP-E10 (1300D, 1200D)
Speedlite 600EX-RT	BG-E18 (7D Mark II)	LP-E17 (760D, 750D, M3)
*Price after £75 cashback from Canon	For even more grips, see website	For even more batteries, see website

E-Series	Alpha-Series
16mm f/2.8 Pancake	30mm f/2.8 SAM 1:1 Macro DT
24mm f/1.8 ZA Carl Zeiss	35mm f/1.8 DT
24mm f/2.0 Carl Zeiss T*	50mm f/1.4 Carl Zeiss
50mm f/1.8 OSS	11-18mm f/4.5-5.6 DT
55mm f/1.8 FE Sonnar T* ZA	16-35mm f/2.8 Carl Zeiss T*
90mm F2.8 Macro G FE OSS	24-70mm f/2.8 II Carl Zeiss T*
10-18mm f/4 OSS	55-200mm f/4.0-5.6 SAM DT
16-50mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	70-200mm f/2.8 G SSM II
16-70mm f/4G ZA OSS	
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 P. Zoom	
24-70mm f/4 FE Vario-Tessar T*	
24-240mm f/3.5-6.3 FE OSS	
28-70mm f/3.5-5.6 FE OSS	
28-135mm f/4 G FE PZ OSS	
55-210mm f/4.5-6.3 OSS	
70-200mm f/4 G FE OSS	



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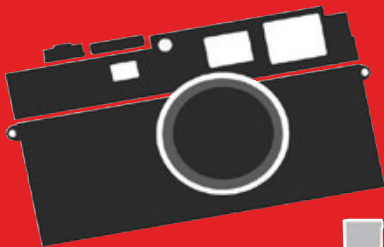
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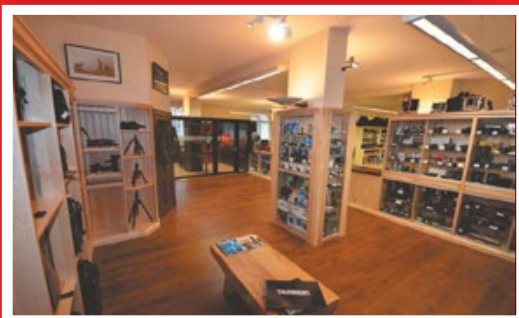
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150mm F4 PS.....		Sigma 12-24mm F4.5-5.6 EX DG HSM.....	E+ / E++ £259 - £299	220 Vacuum Film Insert.....	Mint- £99	16-50mm F3.5-5.6 OISXC E++ / Mint- £99 - £129	
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SQA 220J Mag.....		Sigma 70-210mm F2.8 Apo.....	E+ £99	GB72 Hood.....	E+ £59	35mm F1.4 XF R.....	E++ £249
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PGi29 Pixma Pro 1 Originals: Set of 12 £229.99 Colours 36ml each £19.99		No.16 Fountain Pen Inks Originals: No.16 Set of 4 £22.99 No.16 Black 5.4ml £7.99 No.16 Colours 3.1ml each £5.99 No.16XL Set of 4 £42.99 No.16XL Black 12.9ml £14.99 No.16XL Colours 6.5ml each £11.99 Compatibles: No.16 Set of 4 £14.99 No.16 Black 12ml £3.99 No.16 Colours 12ml each £3.99	
PGi72 Pixma Pro 10 Originals: Set of 10 £94.99 Colours 14ml each £9.99		No.18 Daisy Inks Originals: No.18 Set of 4 £22.99 No.18 Black 5.2ml £7.99 No.18 Colours 3.3ml each £5.99 No.18XL Set of 4 £42.99 No.18XL Black 11.5ml £14.99 No.18XL Colours 6.6ml each £11.99 Compatibles: No.18 Set of 4 £14.99 No.18 Black 12ml £3.99 No.18 Colours 12ml each £3.99	
CLi42 Pixma Pro 100 Originals: Set of 8 £74.99 Colours 13ml each £9.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 14ml each £3.99		No.24 Elephant Inks Originals: No.24 Set of 6 £41.99 No.24 Colours 4.6ml each £7.99 No.24XL Set of 6 £64.99 No.24XL Colours 8.7ml each £11.99 Compatibles: No.24 Set of 6 £22.99 No.24 Black 7ml £3.99 No.24 Colours 7ml each £3.99	
CLi8 Pixma Pro 9000 Originals: Set of 8 £74.99 Colours 14ml each £9.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 14ml each £3.99		No.26 Polar Bear Inks Originals: No.26 Set of 4 £29.99 No.26 Black 6.2ml £8.99 No.26 Colours 4.5ml each £7.99 No.26XL Set of 4 £49.99 No.26XL Black 12.1ml £14.99 No.26XL Colours 9.7ml each £13.99 Compatibles: No.26 Set of 4 £14.99 No.26 Black 10ml £3.99 No.26 Colours 7ml each £3.99	
PGi9 Pixma Pro 9500 Originals: Set of 10 £84.99 Colours 14ml each £8.99 Compatibles: Set of 10 £44.99 Colours 14ml each £4.99		T0481-T0486 Seahorse Inks Originals: Set of 6 £69.99 Colours 13ml each £16.99 Compatibles: Set of 6 £19.99 Colours 13ml each £3.99	
More Canon Inks... Originals: PGi520/CLi521 Set of 5 £42.99 PGi520 Black 19ml £9.99 CLi521 Colours 9ml £8.99 PGi525/CLi526 Set of 5 £42.99 PGi525 Black 19ml £9.99 CLi526 Colours 9ml £8.99 PGi550/CLi551 Set of 5 £37.99 PGi550 Black 15ml £9.99 CLi551 Colours 7ml £7.99 PGi550/CLi551XL Set of 5 £54.99 PGi550XL Black 22ml £11.99 CLi551XL Colours 11ml £10.99 PG540 Black 8ml £10.99 PG540XL Black 21ml £15.99 CL541 Colour 8ml £13.99 CL541XL Colour 15ml £15.99 PG545XL Black 15ml £13.99 CL546XL Colour 13ml £15.99 Compatibles: PGi5 Black 27ml £4.99 CLi8 Colours 13ml £3.99 PGi5/CLi8 Set of 5 £19.99 PGi520 Black 19ml £4.99 CLi521 Colours 9ml £3.99 PGi520/CLi521 Set of 5 £19.99 PGi525 Black 19ml £4.99 CLi526 Colours 9ml £3.99 PGi525/CLi526 Set of 5 £19.99 PGi550XL Black 25ml £4.99 CLi551XL Colours 12ml £3.99 PGi550/CLi551XL Set of 5 £19.99 BCi6 Colours 15ml £2.99 PG40 Black 28ml £12.99 CL41 Colour 24ml £16.99 PG50 Black 28ml £12.99 CL51 Colour 24ml £14.99 PG510 Black 11ml £13.99 CL511 Colour 11ml £15.99 PG512 Black 18ml £13.99 CL513 Colour 15ml £15.99 PG540XL Black 21ml £13.99 CL541XL Colour 15ml £14.99 PG545XL Black 15ml £11.99 PG546XL Black 21ml £12.99		T0541-T0549 Frog Inks Originals: Set of 8 £105.99 Colours 13ml each £14.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 13ml each £3.99	
		T0591-T0599 Lily Inks Originals: Set of 8 £89.99 Colours 13ml each £11.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 13ml each £3.99	
<i>Many more in stock!</i>		<i>More Epson inks >>></i>	

Many more in stock!

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We now stock a comprehensive range of frames, mounts, albums and accessories. The full range can be viewed on our website, with detailed close-up images of each product to help you choose the perfect way to display your printed photographs. Below is just a tiny sample of what we offer:



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Available in Burgundy or Blue.



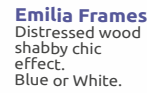
Travel Albums
Over a dozen designs in stock.



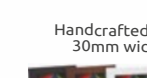
Grafton Albums
Available in Burgundy or Blue.



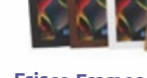
Baby Albums
Multiple different designs available.



Emilia Frames
Distressed wood shabby chic effect. Blue or White.



Rio Frames
Handcrafted solid wood with 30mm wide profile, in four colours.



Frisco Frames
Simple, basic design available in a huge range of sizes & colours.



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EPSON	hp
T0711-T0714 Cheetah Inks Originals: Set of 4 £32.99 Black 7.4ml £8.99 Colours 5.5ml each £8.99 Compatibles: Set of 4 £14.99 Black 7.4ml £4.99 Colours 5.5ml each £3.99	Originals: No.38 Colours 27ml each £26.99 No.62XL Black 12ml £21.99 No.62XL Colour 11.5ml £23.99 No.300 Black 4ml £10.99 No.300 Colour 4ml £12.99 No.301 Black 3ml £9.99 No.301 Colour 3ml £11.99 No.301XL Black 8ml £18.99 No.301XL Colour 6ml £18.99 No.350 Black 4.5ml £11.99 No.351 Colour 3.5ml £14.99 No.363 Black 6ml £13.99 No.363 C/M/Y/PC/PM each £9.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £39.99 No.364 Black 6ml £7.99 No.364 PB/C/M/Y 3ml each £6.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £21.99 No.364XL Black 14ml £13.99 No.364XL PB/C/M/Y 6ml each £12.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £49.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £46.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £43.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £69.99
T0791-T0796 Owl Inks Originals: Set of 6 £72.99 Colours 11.1ml each £12.99 Compatibles: Set of 6 £19.99 Colours 11.1ml each £3.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99
T0801-T0806 Hummingbird Inks Originals: Set of 6 £49.99 Colours 7.4ml each £8.99 Compatibles: Set of 6 £19.99 Colours 7.4ml each £3.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99
T0871-T0879 Flamingo Inks Originals: Set of 8 £66.99 Colours 11.4ml each £9.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 11.4ml each £3.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99
T0961-T0969 Husky Inks Originals: Set of 8 £69.99 Colours 11.4ml each £8.99 Compatibles: Set of 8 £27.99 Colours 11.4ml each £3.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99
T1571-T1579 Turtle Inks Originals: Set of 8 £149.99 Colours 25.9ml each £18.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99
T7601-T7609 Killer Whale Originals: Set of 9 £169.99 Colours 25.9ml each £18.99	Compatibles: No.15 Black 46ml £4.99 No.21 Black 10ml £7.99 No.22 Colour 21ml £11.99 No.45 Black 45ml £4.99 No.56 Black 24ml £9.99 No.57 Colour 24ml £12.99 No.78 Colour 36ml £9.99 No.110 Colour 12ml £10.99 No.300XL Black 18ml £14.99 No.300XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.301XL Black 15ml £14.99 No.301XL Colour 18ml £16.99 No.337 Black 21ml £10.99 No.338 Black 21ml £10.99 No.339 Black 34ml £12.99 No.343 Colour 21ml £12.99 No.344 Colour 21ml £14.99 No.348 Photo 21ml £12.99 No.350XL Black 30ml £14.99 No.351XL Colour 20ml £16.99 No.363 Black 20ml £6.99 No.363 Colours 6ml each £4.99 No.363 SET OF 6 £24.99 No.364 Black 10ml £4.99 No.364 Colours 5ml each £3.99 No.364 SET OF 4 £15.99 No.364XL Black 18ml £8.99 No.364XL Colours 11ml each £7.99 No.364XL SET OF 4 £31.99 No.920XL SET OF 4 £19.99 No.932XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.940XL SET OF 4 £29.99 No.950XL SET OF 4 £29.99

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A4 50 sheets		£18.99	
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A3 20 sheets		£29.99	
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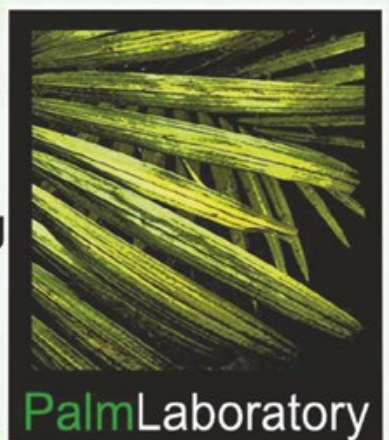
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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'Bison grazing in geyser fumes, USA', 1995 by Thomas Hoepker



© THOMAS HOEPPER/MAGNUM PHOTOS

This photograph reminds me of the so-called 'naïve' paintings of Henri Rousseau (1844-1910), and even though I know it's a bison I always remember it as a rhinoceros. This is perhaps a tribute to its combination of formalism and surrealism.

Formally, the image is divided into four: vertically by the river and twin-trunk tree, and horizontally by the base of the woods and the steam on the right. Formalism was very much a feature of Rousseau's work. There is classical symbolism, too: bright clouds of steam (fire and air) providing a diagonal counterweight to the dark mass of the bison (earth and water).

The surrealism is harder to define. Part of the surrealism here is the steam. Until you have seen the steam of hot springs, it is barely imaginable and completely unreal. Another part is the scale. We know

that bison are huge, and yet this animal is almost dwarfed by the landscape. Then there is the contrast between the impressionist colours on the left, diffused by the steam, and the bright, almost harsh colours on the right. It is like something half-remembered from a dream, and if that isn't surreal, I'm not sure what is.

There are many superb details: the rim of light on the bison's back; the tree against the steam, centre right; the light diagonal, lower right, breaking up what might otherwise be a too-large empty expanse; the red flowers.

It's all very well to say, 'he was lucky' or 'he was in the right place at the right time'. True, but to a considerable extent he made his own luck just by going there. However, we can learn a great deal about photography by imagining ourselves in his shoes, looking through his viewfinder.

How would you compose this photograph? Isn't the bison too far to the left, and too small in the frame? And a bit too obscured by the steam? The way the picture is divided so neatly into quarters: does that really work? Would it work better with a different focal length, or with the camera swung left or right, or up or down?

The answer to all these questions is the same. Most of us start out with more or less of an eye for a picture. With practice, we can develop it. We will do best when we photograph what fascinates us, and what fascinates one person will not necessarily fascinate another. Sometimes it's a bit of a hassle (possibly an expensive hassle) to get to the best places to take pictures. The more pictures we look at, be they Hoepker photographs or Rousseau paintings, the more we'll learn. One day, we won't need to analyse things any more.

AP

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his new website at www.rogerandfrances.eu). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. **Next week he considers an image by Gordon Parks**



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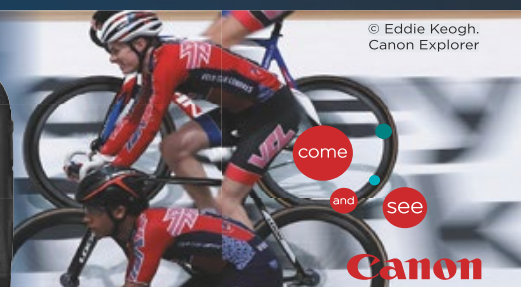


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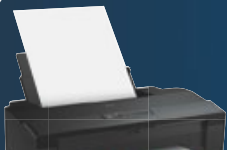
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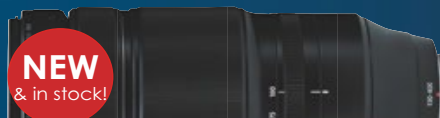
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